

ARSLANTEPE MOUND



NOMINATION DOSSIER FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

2019



1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY

- 1.a. Country (and State Party if different)** : TURKEY
1.b. State, Province or Region : Eastern Anatolia, Province of Malatya
1.c. Name of Property : ARSLANTEPE MOUND
1.d. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second:

38° 22' 58.00" N - 38° 21' 47.43" E

1.e. Maps and plans, showing the boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

- Annex 1.e.1: Location Map
Annex 1.e.2: World Heritage and Buffer Zone Boundary Map
Annex 1.e.3: Topography Map
Annex 1.e.4: Ownership Map
Annex 1.e.5: Land Use Map

1.f. Area of nominated property (ha.) and proposed buffer zone (ha.)

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Area of nominated property | : 4.85 ha |
| Buffer zone | : 66.46 ha |
| Total | : 71.31 ha |

2. DESCRIPTION

2.a. Description of the Property

2.a.1. The Nominated Property

Arslantepe is a 4.5 hectares and 30 m. high archaeological mound (tell/höyük) dominating the plain and formed by the superimposition of settlements for millennia, from at least the 6th millennium BC to the late Roman period. It is located in the Malatya plain, 5 kilometres from the city centre and 15 kilometres from the Euphrates right bank.

On the north-eastern edge of the site, the excavations conducted in the 1960s and 1970s brought to light a long sequence of levels from the first half of the 4th millennium BC (Period VII) to the Neo-Hittite phase (Period III). The upper levels were characterized by a superimposition of town-walls and gates of the Late Bronze Age (period IV) and the Iron Age (Neo-Hittite, period III). Levels of the earlier period in this zone belonged to Period VII (first half of the 4th millennium and consisted of common mud brick houses of rather small dimensions made of one to three rooms, in one case with a geometric painting on the wall alternating black and white triangles. Numerous ovens have been found, mainly outside the dwellings, and burials underneath the floors or close to the houses with simple and poorly

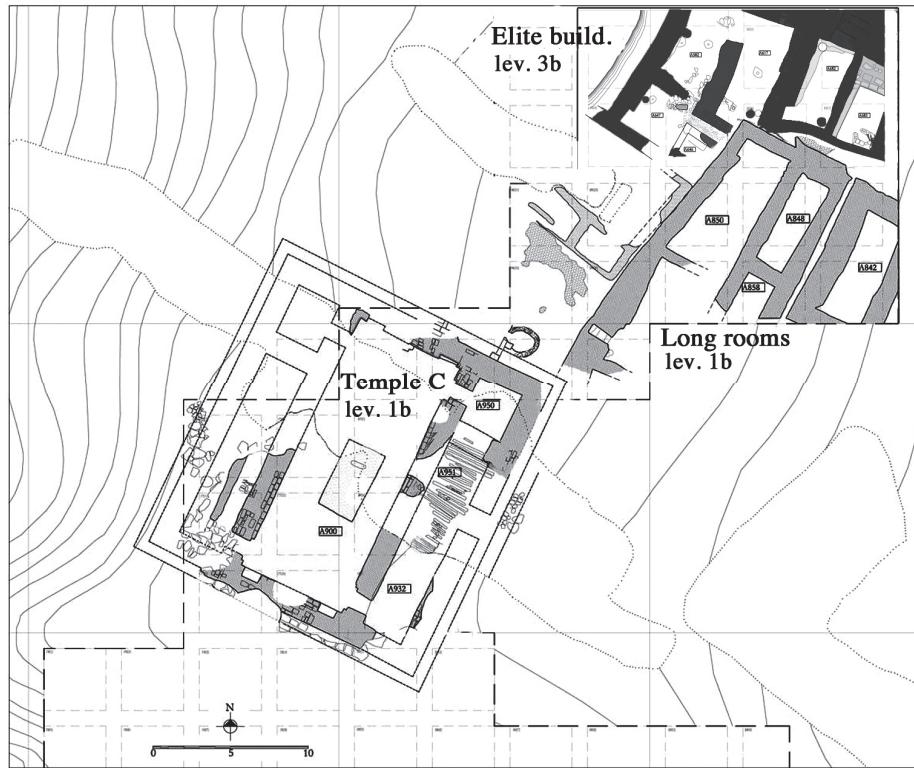
differentiated grave goods. Adults were buried in a flexed position lying on one side often with shell and bead ornaments; only in one instance was the body accompanied by a stone stamp seal while in another case the body was resting on two large cooking pots and had a set of two bowls and one beaker at its feet. Small children and infants were buried in pots underneath the floor of the houses.



Period VII (Late Chalcolithic 3–4). Elite residence
(the so-called column building) on the upper part of the mound

Excavations in the western/south-western area started in 1972. Here again a long sequence of levels covering the 4th, 3rd and early 2nd millennia have been brought to light over large extensions. The earliest period thoroughly investigated so far is Period VII, Late Chalcolithic 3-4, 3800-3400 BC). In the higher part of the mound, on the top of the ancient hill, more recent excavations have brought to light imposing large buildings with mud brick walls over 1-1.20 m thick, covered with white plaster and often with paintings on the walls, belonging to several successive levels. The earlier construction phase so far excavated in this area consisted of fairly monumental buildings with traces of wall paintings and white-plastered mud brick columns lining the walls. The monumental character of these buildings, which stands out in comparison with the houses that have been excavated on the northeastern edge of the tell, their large size and ground plan, their topographic location as a separate district on the top of the mound, their proximity to public ceremonial areas, and the material unearthed there suggest that they were not for ceremonial use or /administrative activities, but rather residences for the élites.

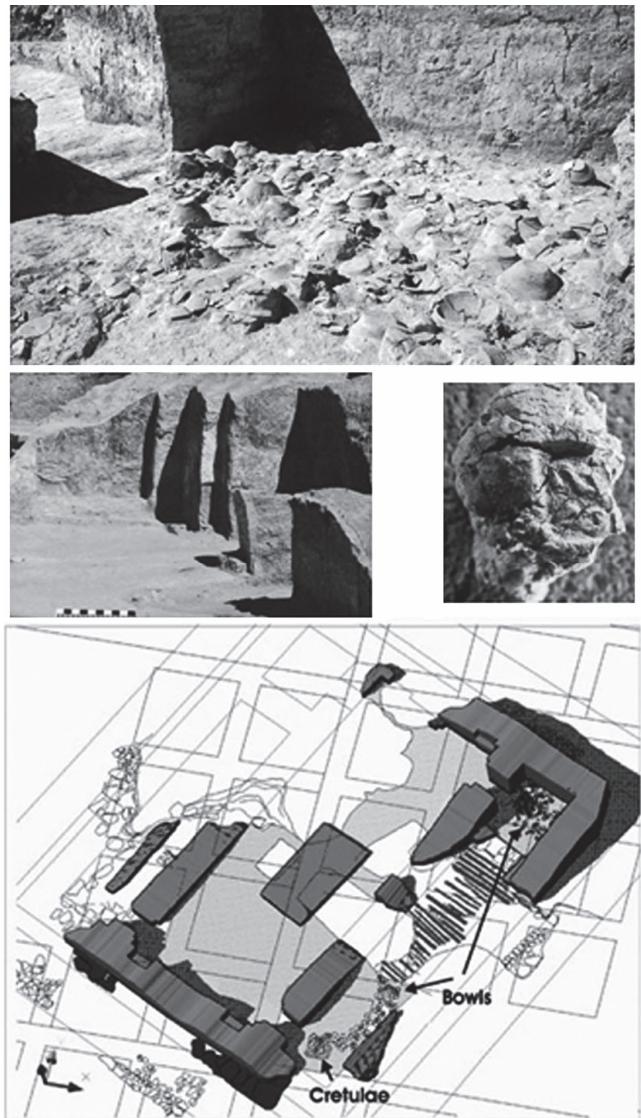
Close by these residences, immediately S/SW of them and near the western edge of the mound, the excavations have revealed two large and monumental ceremonial buildings probably two temples. The latest and most preserved one of them (Temple C- occupies an extent of more than 450 m²), had a tripartite plan and was built on a platform made of huge stone slabs and mud layers standing on a series of parallel horizontal wooden poles. This platform raised the building above the surrounding surface.



Period VII. Plan of the main superimposed élite buildings in the western/south-western area of the mound.

Tripartite floor plan, which was only used in these buildings at Arslantepe, together with multiple recessed niches decorating the short sides of the central room, is reminiscent of Mesopotamian architecture. There are, on the other hand, also features of local, or at all events, northern traditions, such as the wall paintings in the northern niches of the main room and the particular sophisticated construction technique using wooden beams which laid horizontally under the stone platform. This combination of foreign and local features already reveals the originality of the Arslantepe development towards an early hierarchical society, within the general framework of a shared Mesopotamian cultural environment.

The layouts of the structures dated to period VII show a certain uniformity in planning choices: square massive structures were oriented along a north-east/southwest axis. The structural features demonstrate an evident ability to realize complex building concepts but they never attain the high standard of the following period VIA. The mud bricks are heterogeneous both if we compare those used in different buildings and different phases and inside the same walls. The foundations, except for the platform of Temple C, never achieve the grandeur of the foundations of the following periods, although several interesting solutions were employed.

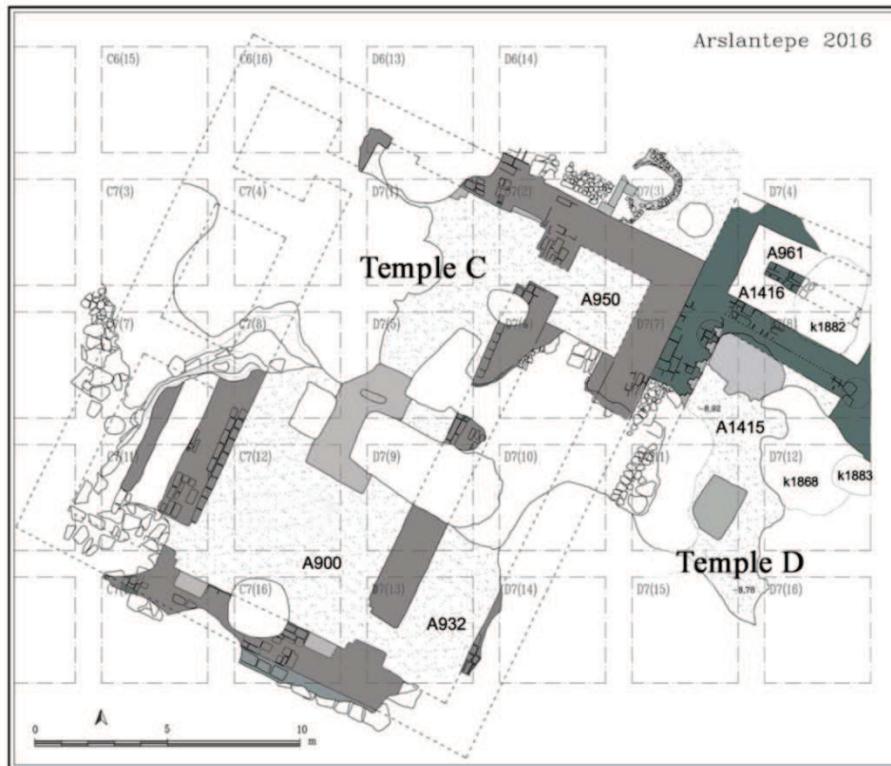


Period VII (LC4). The ceremonial building (Temple C) with materials in situ.
Top: bowls upside down on the floor of the northern side room; Center left: niches on the northeastern corner of the large central room; Center right: cretula from the southern side room; Bottom: isometric plan of the building.

Fireplaces and benches and, in one structure of particular relevance (A582/A617), clay columns, which were possibly employed as decorative elements, characterized the internal arrangement of the structures of this period. Ovens were built against the walls (A849, A845 and A683) and in one case (behind the temple) they were oval and detached from the walls; the fireplaces, circular, were located in the middle of the rooms (A581, A582, A617, A646), while a large vessel was inserted in the angular bench of A682, probably as a fixed container for water. The building techniques, which were based on the use of earth, stone and wood, show walls which tended to be very thick in comparison to the available space.

However, we cannot exclude that the great thickness of the walls in specific monumental structures (such as the storerooms A850/A848/A842 and the columns building A582/A617) did also fulfil the need for a second storey. The structures are usually built one against the other and give the impression of a dense and close knit district, in which it is possible to identify a small alley with pebble and sherd floor (A626). The vertical sequence of the levels becomes evident in the excavations carried out in the western areas (E6-D6). In the sequence of the phases of period VII there is a level, which is characterized by two pebble floors and on which several light ovoid structures (A574, A564, A571 and A579) were built.

These structures were probably used for the production of goods or food, and their side walls were built with mud brick or clay and, in one case, with an internal wooden structure.



Period VII, last building phase. Temple C and D.

In the large central room of Temple C, measuring 18 x 7.20 m, containing a low and wide platform in a central position, meals must have been distributed in a ritual context, as evidenced from the presence of hundreds of mass-produced bowls (both flint-scraped and wheel-turned) found scattered on the floor and set aside in the lateral rooms, where they were found piled up and overturned, partly still in situ, and partly probably fallen from an upper storey, as they were ready to be used.



Mass produced bowls from period VII temples



Mass-produced bowls for ceremonial redistribution of food found *in situ* on the floor of the side rooms in Temple C

In the south-eastern room, there were also numerous clay sealings (*cretulae*) bearing seal impressions, which were also found in large amount discarded after use in a small room, originally a stair-room, in the second building (Temple D). The presence of *cretulae* and bowls in large quantities suggests that redistribution practices were performed in this ceremonial environment in connection with an initial process of centralising goods and labour, which was to develop fully at Arslantepe at the end of the 4th millennium BC.

Although the pottery from period VII reflected the general trend towards mass production, the use of chaff pastes, the lack of decoration and poor firing observed in the whole Late Chalcolithic Upper Mesopotamian environment, the shapes and the repertoire one again reveal a local cultural horizon typical of the Malatya plain, with links, also in this case, with the regions to the west of the Euphrates and the ‘Amuq plain. Potter's marks appeared, and may be interpreted as signs for recognising the workshops products brought to common areas for drying or firing.

These two temples were abandoned in the Period VIA (Late Chalcolithic 5, 3400-3100 BC) and to the E/SE of them, an imposing and completely new architectural complex was built along the slope of the mound, made up of agglutinated monumental buildings standing on several terraces and linked by corridors and courtyards, where various different public functions (religious/ceremonial, administrative, storage, reception) were performed.

In the complex, there were two small temples (Temple A and Temple B), which were much smaller than the older Temples C and D and only bipartite. Here, ceremonial activities seem to have been restricted to a limited number of persons, probably the ruling elites.

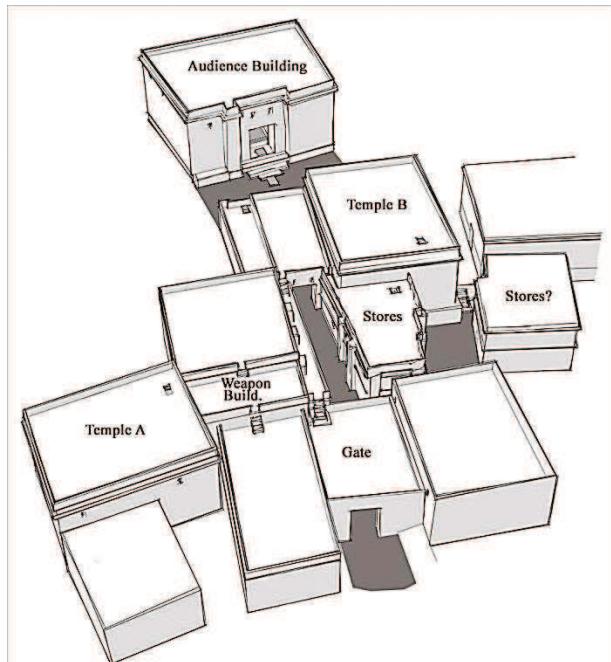
The religious aspect, though still important, seems to have somehow come down, whereas the public performances took place in a large courtyard where people gathered in front of a huge secular building standing in all its monumental splendour, where a probable throne platform has been recently discovered. This was a sort of Audience Building, where people paid tribute to the authority, staying outside the building in front of the ‘throne’

platform. This building communicated, on the backside, with the residences of high status persons, probably the ruler family.



Period VIA: Audience Building and courtyard in the 4th millennium Palace complex

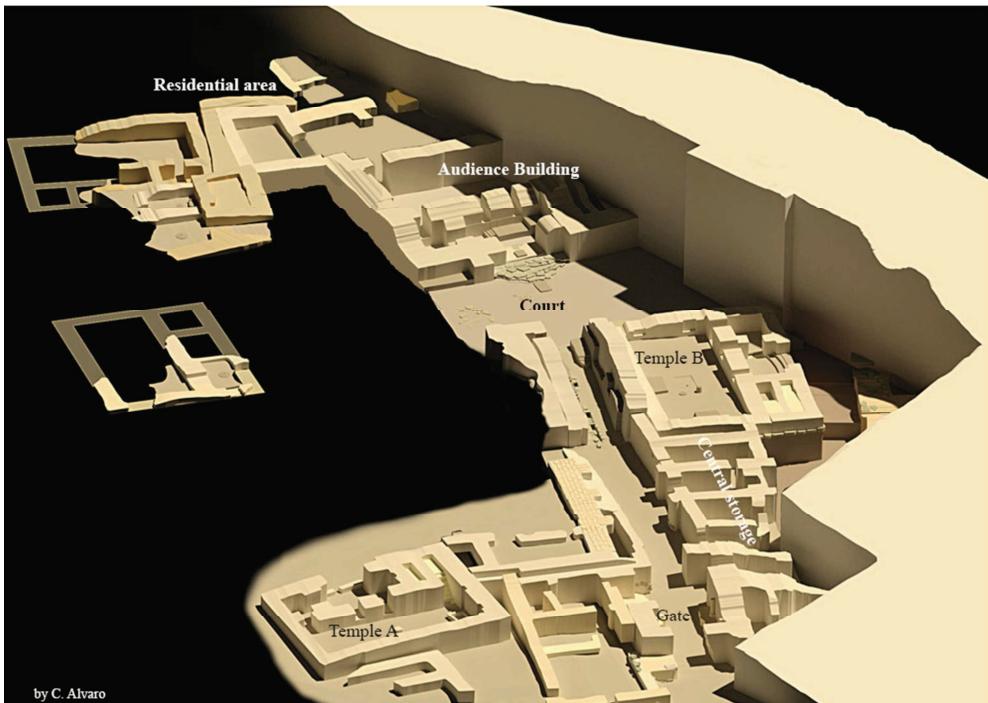
The Arslantepe architectural complex of period VIA therefore appears as the earliest example so far known of a ‘public palace’, preceding by several centuries the famous Near Eastern palaces of the 3rd millennium.



Reconstruction of Period VIA Palace (drawing by C.Alvaro)

The complex of period VIA was archaeologically investigated over a surface of more than 3500 squared meters.

All the structures belonging to this period were built on terraces obtained along the slope, using the different height for buildings with different functions and symbolic status. The structures were built along a NE/SW axis. Stone foundations in part emerging from the floor level, thick mud brick walls, wooden and clay roofs are the typical features of this architecture. Wood and stone were also employed for architectural details as window sills and thresholds.



VIA Palace: 3D drawing

The northern area, on the upper part of the mound, showed several structures built one next to the other, with bipartite plan. The installations, small finds and pottery found on their floors as well as the internal circulation of these structures clearly suggest a domestic function. The monumentality of the buildings and some particular objects however suggest they were the residences of the elites, probably the rulers of the community.

This northern residential complex, which was integral part of the Palace, was built on top of the Chalcolitic structures, which were abandoned in the previous period. Some of the remains were levelled and the foundations of the new buildings were constructed directly on top of the levelled walls. Other still standing walls were reused inside the new structures and influenced the alignment of the new sectors. This sequence shows that the passage from the Late Chalcolitic 4 to the Late Chalcolitic 5 period was marked by a short time gap. This is confirmed by recent C14 datings.

The tripartite model, probably originated from an Ubaid tradition, is only employed at Arslantepe in period VII for the two temple buildings. It is interesting to point out that this architectural model used for ceremonial/public buildings changed from a tripartite scheme to a bipartite one in the subsequent period VIA.



Period VIA: The southern public areas of the Palace from the South: The person walking along the corridor and gate gives an idea of the enormous size of the walls and buildings as they are preserved until today

The buildings progressively added to the first core of the Palace (Audience Building, courtyard, Temple B and residences) extended over a huge area to the South and were linked by a NE/SW corridor sloping to the SW.

A covered stone drain was built under the clay floor of the corridor and drained the water from NE to the SW. Architectural features, internal circulation, small finds and pottery allow us to identify the functions of each building. Two bipartite structures built on the higher terraces may be interpreted as buildings with ritual function, to which only few high status people seem to have participated. A complex of smaller rooms that opened onto a courtyard appear to have been used as storerooms.

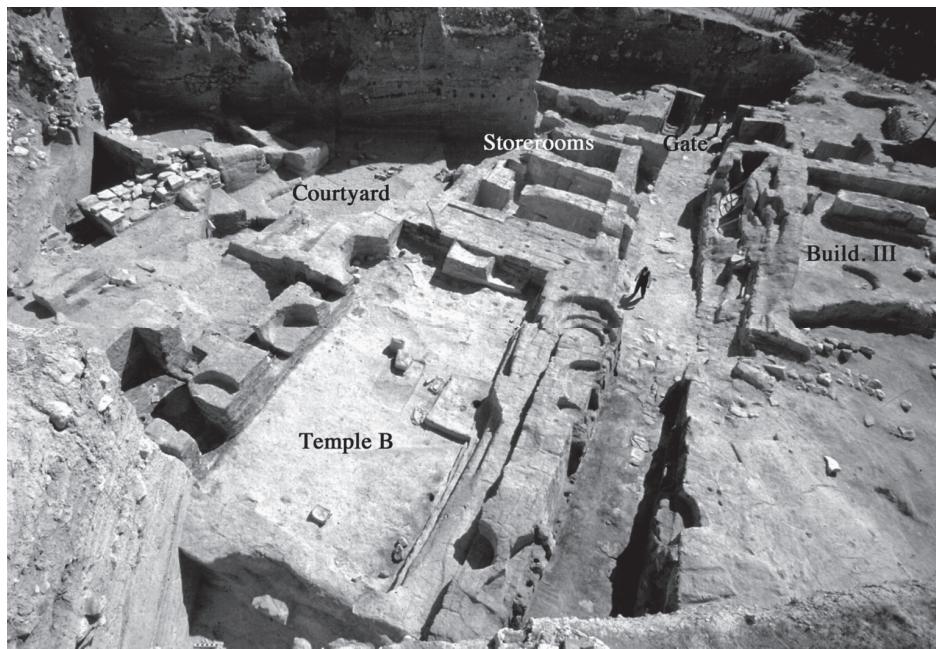
The functions of other not completely excavated or only partly preserved buildings remain unclear, but they appear to have had a representation function. Interesting in this respect is a room where a group of extraordinary arsenical copper weapons, spearheads and swords, were exhibited hanging on the back wall. The circulation was regulated by doors, courtyards, the main corridor that was one of the main internal routes, and minor side corridors. The storerooms opened directly to the corridor while the accessibility to the religious structures was regulated by a more complex and restricted circulation system. The complex is the result of a progressive addition of structures in the course of the last centuries of the 4th millennium BC.

During this enlarging process not all buildings were kept in use and some of them were reused with different functions. The walling of some doors prevented the access to rooms which were abandoned. Also, the entrance from the courtyard to the storerooms was closed and the rooms were not accessible from the interior of the complex. The main entrance of the latest temple (Temple A) was narrowed suggesting a possible shift in function.

The analysis of the buildings, which has taken into account the whole of field data, including the characteristics of the room filling and the materials collapsed on the floor, has allowed to better understand the architectural features of the buildings, their functions, and their process of destruction.

The existence of a second storey for example is proved not only by general architectural features, e.g. the thickness of the walls, but also by the stratified filling into the rooms, which sometimes showed remains of a second floor, and in some other cases showed concentrations of materials collapsed above the filling of the first floor.

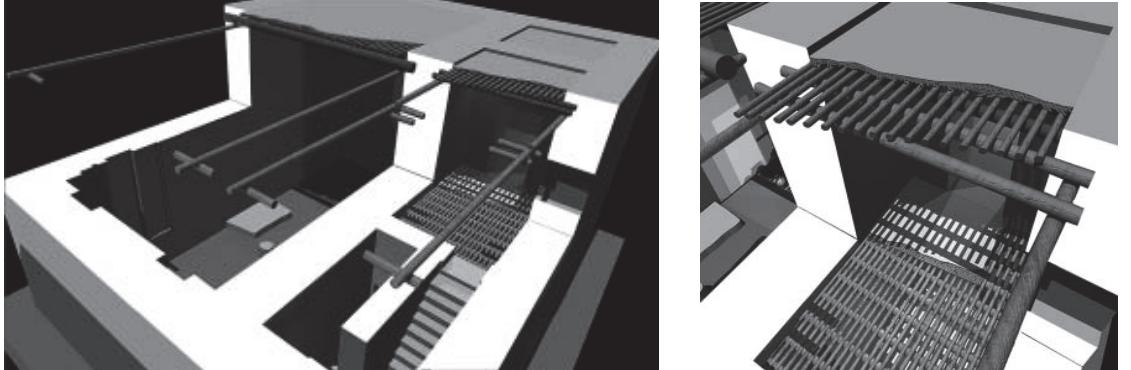
The north-eastern building, so-called Temple B, is a 160 square meters bipartite structure with a large room and three smaller rooms on the eastern wing. The main large entrance provided access to a first passage room with red painted rhomboid figures on the walls and two windows opening onto the main room. The entering route led then to a second room in. The access the large main room was possible only passing through a small side corner room, whith a mortar and a grinding stone embedded in the floor. Several installations were found in the main hall: a central fireplace in a rectangular plastered basin flanked by two cylindrical podia at its southern side. A main altar on the back wall and a second low altar/platform on the western wall suggest the cult function of the room, also confirmed by the presence of three small clay trays one of which is still standing close to the southern wall. The internal walls of this room were decorated with niches. Common people was remained outside looking at the ceremonies from the two windows in the side room. A corner stair-room was also found.



Temple B and the eastern sectors of the palace complex viewed from the North

The sudden destruction by fire of the building and the extraordinary state of preservation of the materials has allowed us to reconstruct the last internal arrangement of the objects into the rooms, as well as the dynamics of the collapse. Thanks to a detailed

documentation of the location of the broken materials on the floor, it was also possible to reconstruct the position of in situ materials and the dynamics of the timbers' collapse on the floor. Each timber was sampled and analysed by the team of Prof. Sadori from the University of Rome la Sapienza revealing different types of wood (elm, ash tree, pine, juniper and poplar, etc.) and each recognised timber piece was dated with C14 method. Several burnt mud pieces found in the collapse revealed traces of grass mat and lattice so that it was possible to reconstruct the building technique of the roofing system.

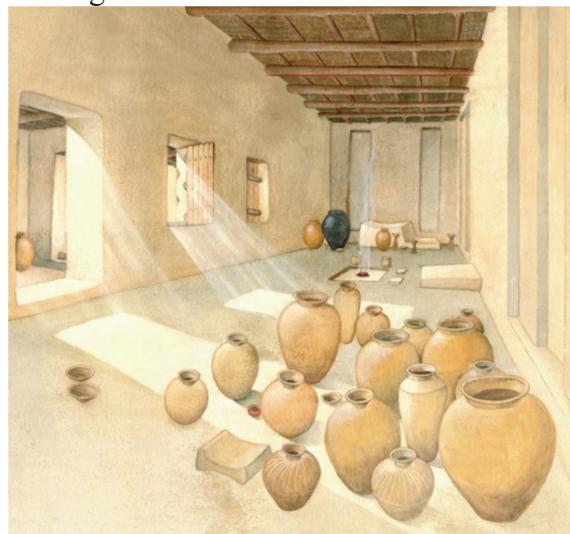


Temple B, timber inside mud brick walls
B, ceiling structure, reconstruction.

Temple

The ceiling of both ground and upper storey were built with large timbers along the width of the rooms and thinner ones forming the frame of the ceiling. A grass mat was laid on top of this timber frame in order to support the clay plaster on top of it. Archaeological evidence and ethnographic analogies confirm this reconstruction. Some of these timbers embedded in the walls burned completely during the destruction of the complex, and some remains of them were preserved, as was the case of part of the wood door frame. Interestingly, local building technique in the near village of Orduzu shows the same features: timbers embedded in the walls, roofing timber frame resting on these embedded timbers, and shorter supporting timbers at the corners.

All these elements, such as the materials in situ, the collapsed architectural elements allowed us to propose a reconstruction of the main room in Temple B with the largest group of in situ pots. The height of the walls was calculated according to the length of the collapsed wall portions found in the filling.

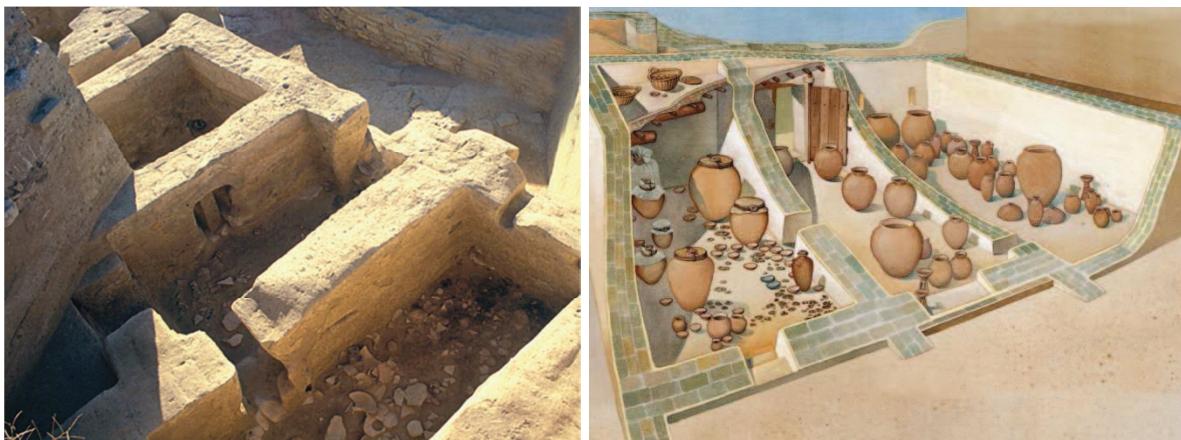


Reconstruction of Temple B main hall with materials in situ, according to the analysis of findings and the location of sherds belonging to the pots recomposed at the restoration lab.

Archaeological and architectural elements together allow a general view of the architectural volumes and provide us with very useful elements for understanding ancient building techniques and the function of the structures.

If we compare the two cult structures of level VIA, Temples A and B, we can point out several similarities as far as similar ritual procedures: same layout, same size, same accessibility, same internal circulation, same rhomboid or oval impressed and painted decoration in the entering room, same internal arrangement of the main room with altars along the walls and podia. However, when we compare the internal disposition of the materials and the different degree of architectural modifications, it is possible to emphasise a difference occurred during their period of use. In Temple B almost all pots, including storage jars, are located in the main area in Temple A by contrast, all containers and storage jars were located in the first and second entering rooms, somehow preventing the access to the main room. Moreover the entrance to Temple A was narrowed by adding two smaller walls, while the layout of Temple B did not suffer any architectural changes. It seems therefore possible that, while Temple B kept its original function, the function of Temple A possibly changed or it was heavily redefined.

In the storeroom complex brought to light so far, there is an interesting and pronounced difference in the function of the two main rooms. The larger, northern room was full of large vessels and was the actual storageplace; the smaller, southern room contained only three pithoi, two large jars and a few cooking pots, but there were hundreds of wheel made mass-produced bowls, probably used for the distribution of meals or food rations, and 130 cretulae bearing seal impressions. Dozens of beautiful restored vessels and the best preserved clay sealings are now kept and exhibited in the Malatya Museum.



Period VIA: The storerooms of the Palace, photo and reconstruction (drawing by T.D'Este)

The pottery was mostly wheel-made, fine, well-fired and pale in colour, and, once again, though being strongly influenced by the Mesopotamian models of the Uruk culture, retained original and typically local features. Mass production was restricted to conical wheel-made bowls, which were now mass-produced on the fast wheel. But, other categories of pottery were also wheel-made and appear more standardized and homogeneous than in the previous period. The disappearance of the potter's marks is also indicative of this change towards a more "industrialized" manufacture. In addition to wares referring to the Syro-Mesopotamian Uruk world and a more 'domestic' hand made kitchen ware, a type of hand-made red-black ware, which had appeared at the end of period VII, also characterised the

Arslantepe period VIA repertoire; its shapes, aesthetic taste and manufacture techniques demonstrate connections with contemporary central Anatolian wares.



Period VIA Pottery

Some of the cretulae had fallen to the floor from the containers which they had sealed, while others were piled up in a corner of the room, probably temporarily set aside; some more had probably fallen from a collapsed upper storey. In this room, which was perhaps supplied from the northern room, the stored foodstuffs were probably redistributed in the form of meals to the workers employed by the central élites. The movement of goods was now controlled in an administrated and "secular" form, independently of any religious or ceremonial practices which had conversely characterised the earliest archaic forms of redistribution.



Seal design

Sealed objects

Thousands of cretulae were also found discarded in ordered groups in specific dumping places inside the palace, after being temporarily set aside and accounted (Some 2200 still bear the seal impression and the clear imprint of the sealed objects). Over 200 different seals with an extraordinary variety of beautiful designs and styles have been reconstructed from the impressions, through a long and thorough study of this unique assemblage of well-contextualized materials.



Period VIA: Cretulae and bowls from the palace storerooms

A significant role was also attributed to the wall paintings, which, in this case, were not only decorations of the walls but figurative motifs and actual scenes painted on the sides of doors and along the main corridor, transmitting ideologically important and highly meaningful messages to everyone entering the palace. The best preserved of these paintings are two almost identical stylised anthropomorphic figures associated with powerfully symbolic elements on both sides of what had originally been the door (subsequently walled in) leading from the access corridor to the internal courtyard of the palace, passing through the central room in the stores. Even more complex and interesting is the depiction of a scene with a sort of car (or plough?) drawn by two oxen and driven by a coachman, which seems to be moving in the direction leading out of the building, painted on the eastern wall of the inner corridor. This image, together with a similar motif (though completely different in style) on a seal impression, stresses the ideological importance of agriculture control by the Arslantepe rulers.



The wall paintings



The wall paintings

The wall paintings in the Arslantepe Palace have been preserved *in situ* and can be still admired by the public visiting the monumental complex.

A group of arsenical copper weapons (nine swords, some decorated with silver inlay, and twelve spearheads) with a quadruple spiral plaque was discovered in one of the buildings of the Palace (Building III), constituting the first evidence so far known of the use of the sword. Other interesting metal findings have been uncovered in the Palace: an unusual arsenical copper door socket at the corner of a monumental entrance to another building, and various other objects made of copper, lead and silver, as well as sophisticated metal alloys.



Period VIA Palace. Group of 22 metal weapons from Building III

Taken together, the buildings forming up this monumental public structure make up a unitary complex, which seems to have been developed following a kind of architectural planning in keeping with the increasing needs and specialised functions of the central institutions. This is the first example so far known of a real Palace, including both diversified public functions and the residences of the ruling elites.



Period VIA Palace. 3D drawing of the southern public sectors by C. Alvaro

The analysis of the sealings has shown that this elite was responsible for the collection and redistribution of food and a real class of bureaucrats have arisen to accomplish sophisticated administrative tasks, even before writing was invented.

The sudden and abrupt collapse of the Palace by a big fire around 3100 BC interrupted for ever this powerful centralisation process, and put an end to the political system related to it.

Period VIB1 (3100-3000 BC) was a phase of abrupt change and transition to a different type of society. Scattered wooden structures consisting of huts and fences for animals were built on the palace ruins by pastoralists settled seasonally at Arslantepe. These groups, which had perhaps already visited the Malatya plain in the previous Palace period, appear to have used the site as a kind of meeting point and political landmark in the region. A large mud-brick building, completely different from all the other structures, consisting of a large meeting hall and storerooms full of vessels and metal objects, was built on the top of the mound, exactly above the 'Audience building' of the ruined palace. The pottery used by these groups was exclusively hand-made red-black and burnished; it was made using identical firing techniques and according to identical aesthetic standards (black was always used on the most visible surfaces of the pots) to those of Late Chalcolithic red-black ware, but new shapes were adopted reminiscent of the repertoire belonging to the Transcaucasian culture. A few items of ceramics belonging to the old Late Uruk tradition have also been found in a special building of the VIB1 period, showing that in other areas of the site, or in the plain, the

sedentary population may have continued to pursue their traditional way of life and maintained their customs.



Copper spearheads attest continuity from the Palace period in metallurgical techniques



Jars of Southern Caucasus type from the pastoralist occupation of the mound in Early Bronze I Period VIB1

At the end of this period, a “royal” cist grave was found on the margins of the tell, with very rich funerary gifts, among which 75 metal objects, weapons, tools, vessels and jewellery in copper, silver, gold and various alloys. On top of the cist grave, 4 adolescents were probably sacrificed, constituting one of the earliest evidence of a human sacrifice.

Two of them, a girl and probably a boy, lay on the top of the tombstone, wearing copper pins and a diadem and hair spirals made of copper-silver alloy, similar to the items found among the grave goods buried with the ‘lord’ in the cist, which may indicate kinship or some other kind of close linkage with him. Two other individuals, once again very young and both female were found outside the area of the cist, with no burial goods, and may have been servants.



Arslantepe. The ‘Royal Tomb’ (3000 BC)



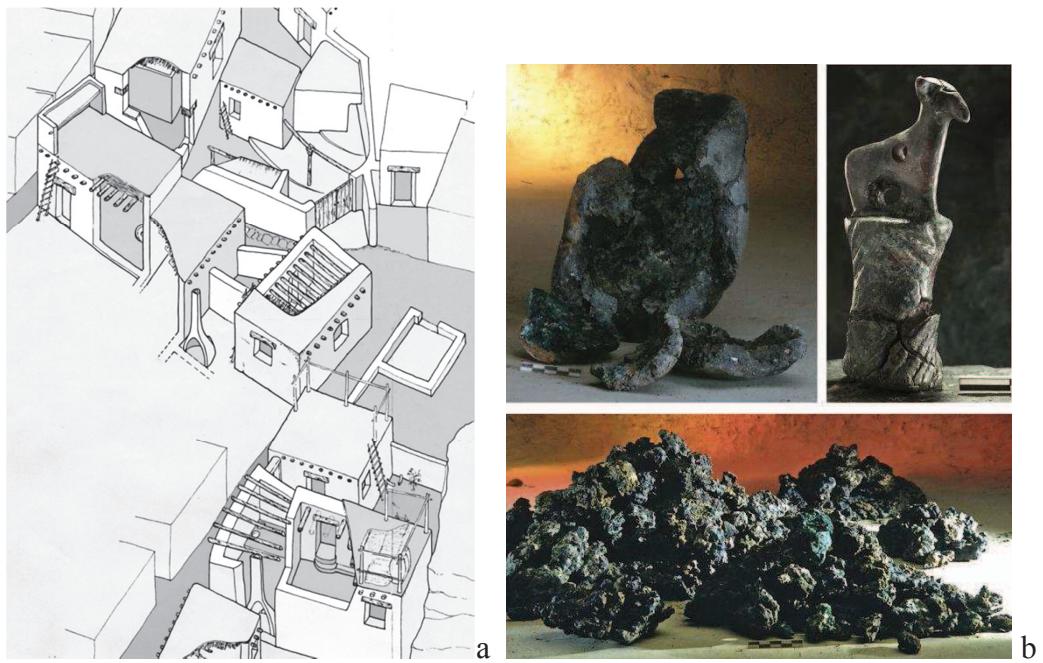


Metal funerary gifts from the 'Royal Tomb'

The materials show the association of items belonging to the pastoralist culture of Period VIB1, linked to the so-called Kura-Araxes cultural environment of the Southern Caucasus and NE Anatolia (Early Transcucasian culture), with features related to the previous Uruk-like culture of the Late Chalcolithic. The mingling of the two traditions living side by side in the border area of the Upper Euphrates valley indicate that at Arslantepe the continuity in the local development was not completely interrupted after the palace destruction and the site is an exceptional testimony of these complex dynamics of cultural interaction between different communities and perhaps ethnic groups.

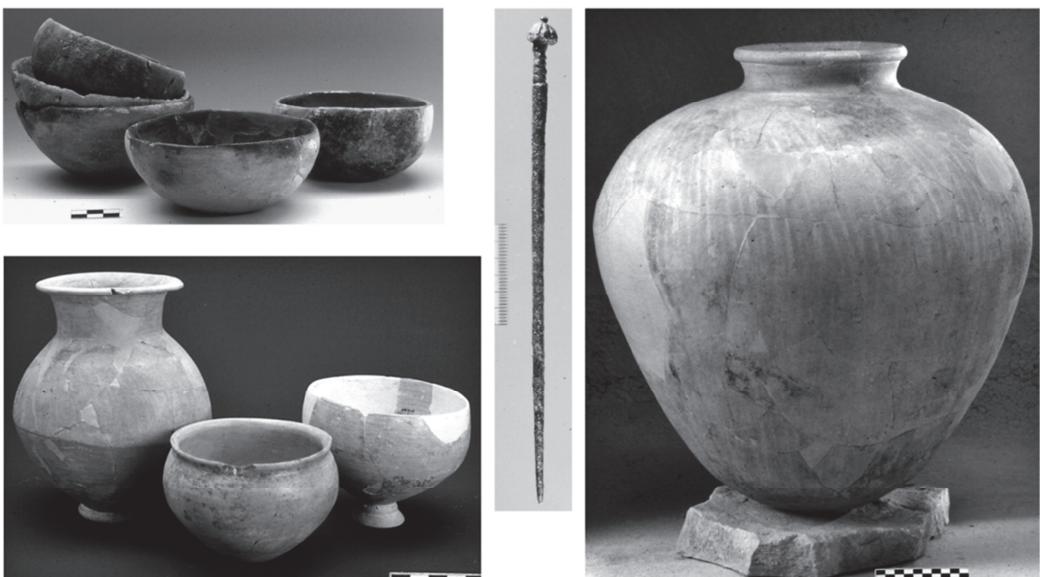
The cist tomb is still visible and will be part of the visit route. A reconstruction of the tomb and its funerary gifts is planned for the near future.

In the following Period VIB2 (3000-2800 BC) a rural village occupied the southern slope of the mound extending around a massive mud-brick wall surrounding an upper town, of which only a large open area was preserved. The residential structures of period VIB2 consisted of several functional units, with one to three rooms which fulfilled domestic functions grouped in blocks of neighbouring houses, separated by streets, paved with sherds, pebbles and slag fragments. The harvest was stored in each residential unit, probably on the roofs. The internal arrangement consisted of round fireplaces in a central position, which were similar in shape to the Late Chalcolithic ones, and of benches of different dimensions and shapes. Basins made of clay were probably used as containers for grains. The ovens, built against the walls, were located outside or in specific rooms. An open area or courtyard was used for communal slaughtering and metal smelting operations, attested by the presence in the courtyard of large crucibles, small mineral fragments and chilos of slag. This evidence of metal smelting carried out in the village, is an uncommon very important documentation of a very early metallurgical technology using sulphide minerals.



Arslantepe Period VIB2: a. Reconstruction of some of the village houses; b. Crucible, slag and copper object

In Period VIB2 there was a revival of the wheel-made light coloured pottery of Uruk origin. This shows both a continuation of the earlier LC typological features, such as the necked jars with reserved slip decoration, and the appearance of a number of new shapes which produced a general change in the repertoire on the whole, with an increase in the number of small vessel shapes and a decrease of large pots suitable for central storage.



A new typology of houses and internal arrangements characterize the following periods; as a matter of fact, during the following periods VIC and VID (2750-2000 B.C.) the settlement was organized differently. Period VIC marked the largest cultural split recorded in the history of Arslantepe and the Malatya region, may be even ascribable to the settlement of a new population, thus marking the beginning of a new age. From period VIC onwards, indeed, the shape of the houses changed, as did the domestic equipment, with the appearance of new types of hearths and ovens, and the pottery production, which now only comprises two main hand-made classes of ware, one dark and one painted. External relations of the

Arslantepe community also radically changed becoming more restricted and limited to the Anatolian Upper Euphrates region, even though a few imported metallic ware items indicated there were still some sporadic contacts with the Syro-Mesopotamian environment.

These general cultural features and domestic customs as well as the external relations of the Arslantepe community developed with a remarkable continuity throughout the whole of the second half of the third millennium, in the Arslantepe Period VID, corresponding to Early Bronze III. But on this new cultural basis, starting from 2500 BC, a process of gradual sedentarisation and expansion of the settlement began, which achieved a degree of settlement agglutination and planning in the mature VID2 phase, around 2300 BC. We might in some respects define this new arrangement of the settlement as ‘urban’, not in the Mesopotamian sense of the term – as a large concentration of population in a vast and organic settlement comprising numerous specialised and interdependent social sectors –, but in the Anatolian sense of a compact, clearly defined and often agglutinated settlement, somehow distinct from its rural landscape.

We have no idea whether Arslantepe once again became a central place, as it had been in the 4th millennium, but it was certainly the largest and most important site in the Malatya plain. For a certain period of time there was probably still some interaction with seminomadic groups that frequented the plain, and who must have established relations of peaceful coexistence with these new ‘settled’ and farming communities. This may be inferred from the presence, from time to time, of round semi-subterranean dwellings, which were now much more evolved and carefully constructed, with plastered benches and small entrance steps, usually occupying open spaces and abandoned areas. However these visits came almost to an end, with a few isolated exceptions, in the mature VID2 phase, when the settlement had by now covered virtually the whole slope of the mound, with streets, squares and water channels, and the urban area was still more sharply distinct and separated from the rural hinterland by an imposing town walls with semicircular bastions, which now surrounded the whole settlement. The town-wall form Period VID2 is still visible at the entrance of the Open Air Museum of Arslantepe.

The defence walls, which seems to have become a characteristic feature of the EBIII sites in this region, may indicate that there was a certain degree of conflict between independent and perhaps competing centres, according to a typically Anatolian model.

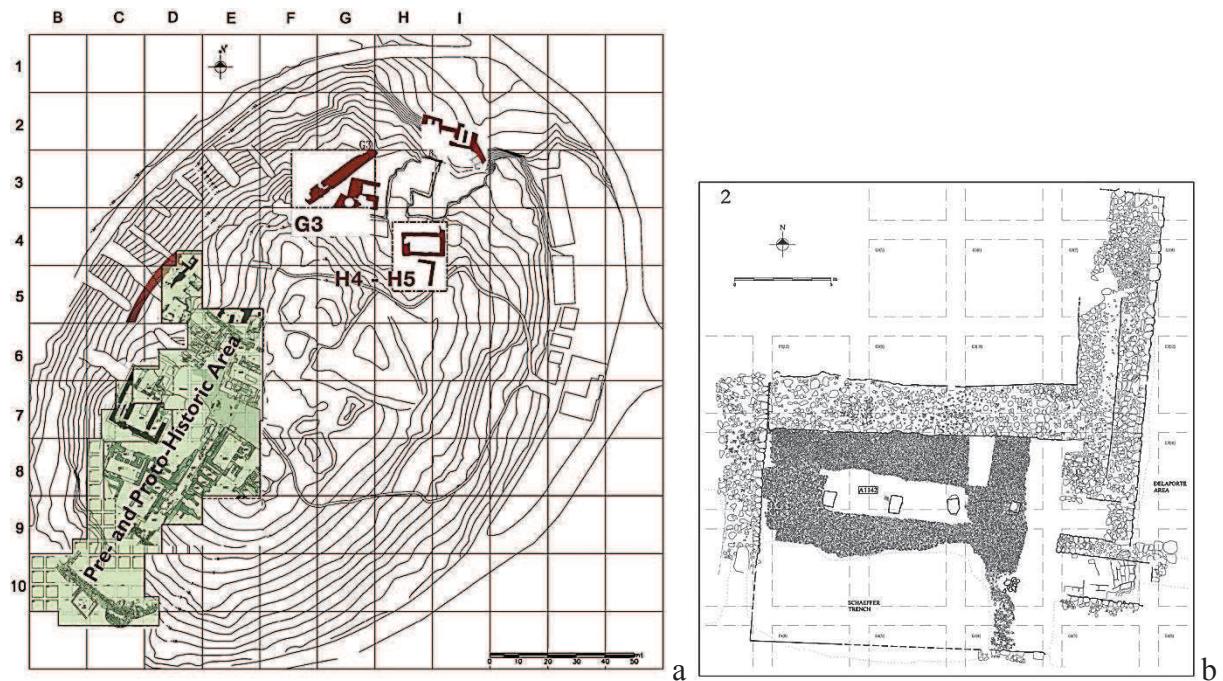


a: The settlement of Period VID2 (EBIIIB); b: The fortification town-wall of Period VIB2, with a round tower.

The pottery of period VID2 was a development from the EBII tradition. It continued to consist of two main classes, both handmade, with an increased number of shapes and class varieties and with a few typical imports from the south. But it was now much more standardised and present over a wider territory that included both the Malatya and the Elazığ provinces.

This new organisation of the site and its relations with the territory remain more or less unchanged until the Middle Bronze Age (Period VA), albeit with new openings towards the northern Syro-Mesopotamian world. There would certainly have also been contacts with Central Anatolia, which had already existed in EBIII. But Arslantepe seems to have remained on the border of the Palaeo-Assyrian trade routes, without being directly involved.

It was probably in the context of a new trend towards a the opening to other worlds, but in a community still characterised by what was a traditional Anatolian political organisation, that new intense relations with Central Anatolia were established during the Old Hittite Kingdom, in the second quarter of the second millennium (Late Bronze I, Period VB). The history of Arslantepe changed once again, and its central position in the region was re-established on new basis, as was its role in the international panorama of Late Bronze Age. The most obvious archaeological sign of this was the construction of a monumental fortified citadel in the northeastern part of the mound, whose town gates were no longer opened in a south/south-west direction, as it had been in the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze phases, but towards the north-east, looking this time towards the Euphrates, which became the new political ‘border’.



a: The Arslantepe mound with the LB and IA structures (in red); b: Pillared hall of the Neo-Hittite phase.

The recent investigations have brought to light an interesting transitional phase following the collapse of the Hittite Empire in Central Anatolia and preceding the foundation of the Neo-Hittite kingdom of Arslantepe/Melid. In this phase, imposing structures, among which a huge town-wall 4 m. thick, made of a solid stone foundations and a mud-brick elevation, are testimony of an interesting continuity in the local political organization, leading

the site to take the role of capital of the Neo-Hittite kingdom. Close to this wall, which is preserved for a height of more than 3 m, two beautiful stone reliefs were found collapsed on the floor, that may have been part of a destroyed town-gate.



Fortification town-wall surrounding the citadel of the Early Iron Age



Stone reliefs found collapsed close to the Early iron Age town-wall. Exhibited in the malatya Museum.

All these evidences confirm the role of political central place that Arslantepe played across the millennia, interacting with the neighbouring political entities, states, and empires as a powerful counterpart. The extraordinary ivory plaque very recently found in one of the Neo-Hittite levels is evidence of the continuing participation of the site in the wide international relation network, playing a crucial role in the historical events of various periods, from the early formation of State societies in the 4th millennium BC to the expansionist struggles between empires in the 2nd and 1st millennia BC.



Arslantepe. Ivory plaque in the Nimrud style from a Neo-Hittite level.

This flourishing history ended with the definitive destruction of the town by Sargon II of Assyria.

2.a.2. Buffer Zone

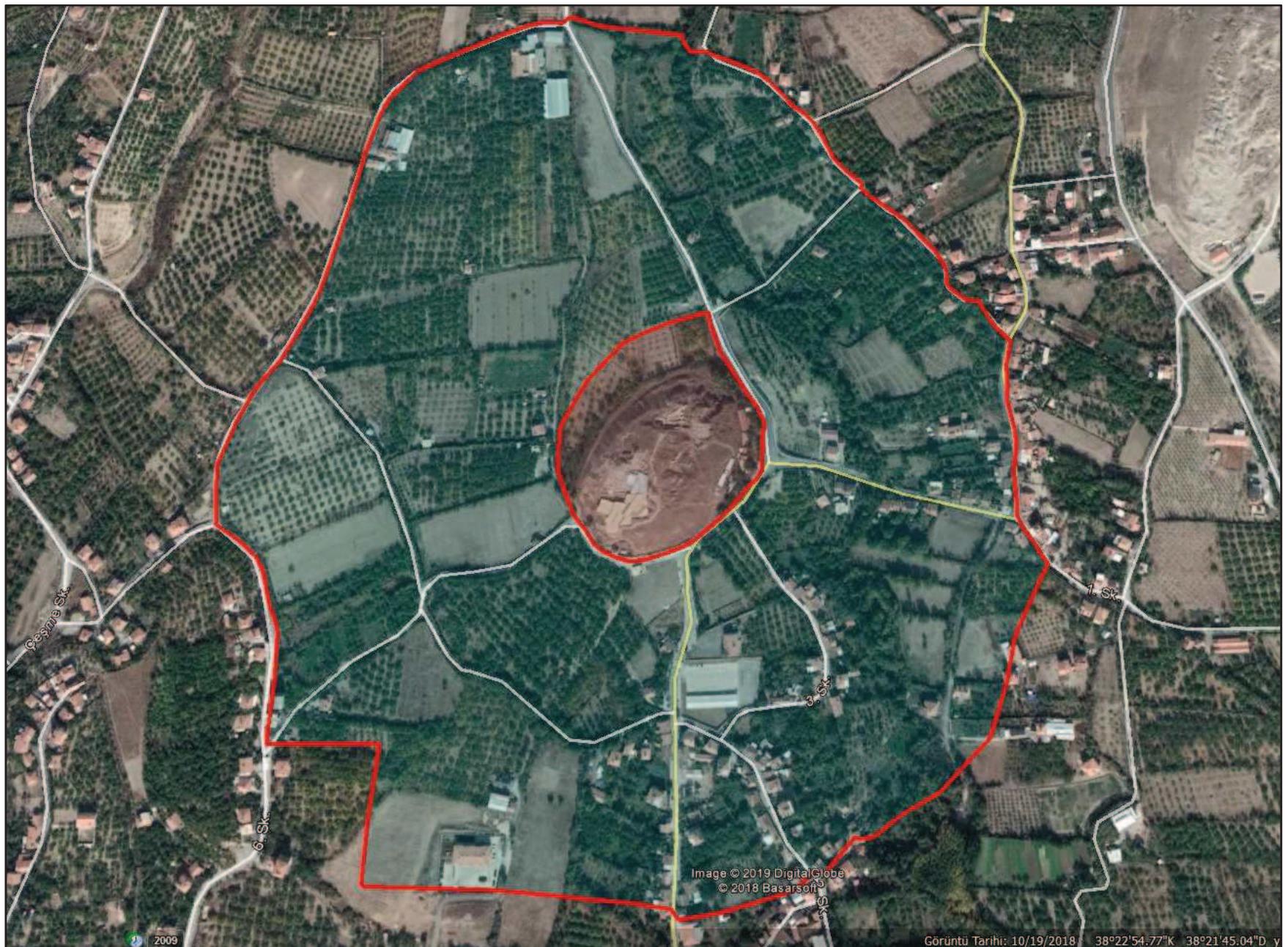
The mound is surrounded by the Orduzu village, made of dispersed houses among gardens. Some of the houses along the street leading to the site are still mud-brick buildings.

The Malatya plain, on which the site of Arslantepe rises in an eccentric position in the town of Orduzu, is characterized by rainfall not exceeding 400 mm per year and high summer temperatures (average in July of 26°). Without taking into account the present irrigation practices, these values determine sub-desertic steppe conditions, which only locally give rise to oases due to the emergence of groundwater. According to the meteorological office of Turkey, the annual mean temperature of Malatya is 13.7°C, and the mean annual sum of precipitation equals 386 mm, with pronounced monthly maxima during the winter and spring season (1-41 mm, 2-37 mm, 3-51 mm, 4-58 mm, 5-47 mm, 6-18 mm, 7-2 mm, 8-2 mm, 9-7 mm, 10-38 mm, 11-45 mm, 12-41 mm) in the period 1960-2012.

Arslantepe lies in an extensional fault-bounded basin filled with a sequence of alluvial and lacustrine sediments of Neogene age. The immediate surroundings of the site are characterized by Neogene sequences of clay rich lake sediments alternating with sandy fluvial deposits. Both types of sediments contain carbonates; 700 m to the northeast, the remnant of an andesitic volcano probably of Miocene age forms the eastern flank of the small creek valley of the Orduzu Stream, which passes the tell of Arslantepe at its eastern rim.

According to Marcolongo and Palmieri, Arslantepe is situated favourably within the landscape because of a large hydrogeological catchment, supplying the site reliably with running water. Today, large parts of the area of the Malatya Plain are covered by sediments providing fertile soils for extensive apricot plantations. So far, the genesis and age of the young sediments exposed at the surface (Pleistocene or Holocene) have rarely been studied.

The presence of numerous springs both in the plain and near the mound of Arslantepe favours hygropilous and hydrophilous arboreal vegetation (poplars, willows, elms and ashes). This naturally watered soil allows the intensive cultivation of apricot trees in the plain so that now there are few remnants of natural vegetation.



Google Earth image of proposed world heritage and buffer zone boundaries

The south-eastern Turkish province of Malatya is ca. 100 km east of the Anatolian Diagonal, a famous hotspot for biodiversity. This Anatolian province is included in the Irano-Turanian phytogeographical region and is the richest of Turkey in endemic taxa. Among the endemic taxa of the province are species like *Hypericum malatyeanum* Pesymen and *Lotus malatayicus* Poinert, whose names reveal their geographic origin. Various floristic studies have been carried out in the Malatya province in the last two decades. In the region of Malatya, steppe vegetation is dominant. However, in some areas *Quercus* shrubs are common. Among *Quercus* species are *Quercus infectoria* Olivier subsp. *boissieri* (Reuter) O. Schwarz, *Quercus cerris* L. var. *cerris*, *Quercus brantii* Lindl., *Quercus libani* Olivier, often accompanied by many shrubs of rosaceans, mainly ascribed to species of *Crataegus*, *Rosa*, *Prunus*, *Pyrus* and *Cotoneaster*. Gymnosperms are very rare, and represented almost exclusively by some *Juniperus* species, the most common of which is *Juniperus oxycedrus* L. subsp. *oxycedrus*. Many of these species have been used in the 4th and 3rd millennia cal.BC architecture of Arslantepe.

The village of Orduzu is a predominantly agricultural highland plain, approximately 900m asl, mostly cultivated with apricot trees. To the East of the mound is the small hill of Gelincik tepe, where an archaeological site of Early Bronze Age II has been identified and excavated in the late sixties by the Italian team. The immediate surroundings of the mound have only a few numbers of houses, except to the south, where the central part of Orduzu expands and where 5 story cement flat buildings have recently been built. A road passes just by the mound, connecting two sides of Orduzu and linking it to the centre of Battalgazi. The agricultural land surrounding the site is formed by a deep alluvial deposit, the date of which is still unknown, but most probably of historical age. For this reason, archaeological finds outside the mound are extremely difficult to identify, as they might be underlying metres of alluvial deposit. Special attention should thus be given to construction within Orduzu to protect the visual integrity of the mound and the landscape as impact to the site setting will inevitably come from changes in the surrounding landscape. Notwithstanding modern construction, Orduzu, even though very near to the large city of Malatya, still retains today most of its natural environment unaltered, because of the many apricot orchards that characterise it.

Since 1961 male generations of families of Orduzu have worked for the archaeological investigations at Arslantepe. This has brought economic income to the village, even though seasonal, and many of these people, who were otherwise farmers, benefit now from Turkish Social Security Agency (SGK) thanks to this job. Local Orduzu residents still today compose the workmen of the site, and it is in general the less wealthy that get recruited, as it is only those without a job that seek seasonal occupation, as that of an excavation. This has a great economic and social effect on village dynamics as the more marginalized people receive an income and at the same time become those with the most knowledge on the history and importance of the settlement. Permanent jobs too are covered by Orduzu residents, as those of site and excavation guardians.

While the estimated population within buffer zone is about 1000 people, the overall demographic structure within Orduzu neighbourhood can be read from the table below.

Table: Demographic Structure in Orduzu Neighbourhood

	Ages					Total
	0-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60 and above	
Man	1888	1695	1456	840	668	6547
Woman	1883	2938	1367	804	804	7796
Total	3771	4633	2823	1644	1472	14343

Today social and economic conditions of local inhabitants are very different from the past. Most male adults leave the village for jobs in the city of Malatya and in other cities of Turkey, and only few of them have continued working at the excavation for decades, becoming very well trained and closely linked to the site. There are however many university students on summer vacation that come to their village and work at the site, getting financial support for their studies and maintaining, together with the memory and affection still alive in their families, the perception of cultural and economic relevance that Arslantepe has for the village of Orduzu and the Malatya province. The inhabitants of the village, thanks to their long-term involvement and closeness to the archaeologists operating at Arslantepe, have undertaken a process of appropriation of knowledge and are indeed today the best guarantee of protection of the site and transmission through generations of its cultural and historical heritage.

Many inhabitants of Orduzu work today in the city of Malatya and return to the village in the evening. Life in the village, thus, even though so near to the city, is mostly that of a slow running rural context.

Even though women too are more autonomous than before, they, together with children and elderly, are those that mostly keep alive the small town of Orduzu. Local craftsmanship is still visible in the streets, with bread making, boiling of wheat to make bulgur, wool cleaning, preparation of dung cakes for fuel, weaving, drying of vegetables, cutting of wood for winter needs, etc. These activities, that have disappeared elsewhere, at Orduzu still make up an important part of the life style and for this reason should be to some extent preserved, as they represent millennia old local traditions, archaeologically attested at the site of Arslantepe too. The promotion of such traditions furthermore would contribute to an economic as well as social development of women that are mostly those involved in these craft activities.

At the moment Orduzu has no touristic facilities and the local markets that sell beverages and food are about 500 metres from the site. The increase in popularity of Arslantepe will undoubtedly bring the development of facilities and thus economic benefits to the village and immediate region.

At the same time, Arslantepe has already inspired various economic and cultural activities in Malatya. Its name has been given to several shops and two of the symbols of Arslantepe - the 3000 BC metal swords found in the palace and the Hittite Tarhunza statue - have been printed on the apricot metal boxes sold by one of the most relevant apricot merchants in Malatya, Hasanbey.

Local artists too have been inspired by Arslantepe's finds: the main square in Malatya, in front of the Governorate, is decorated with panels inspired to the iconography of the seals found in the Arslantepe palace (Fazıl Ercan is the artist who produced them). Finally, the winner's statuette at the Malatya International Film Festival is that of Tarhunza, again, the Arslantepe Neo-Hittite king.

Since 2009 the Battalgazi Municipality organises an activity called International Caravanserai Meetings (*Uluslararası Kervansaray Buluşmaları*) during which conferences on the history of the region are given and the Arslantepe team is always invited to participate. Art laboratories (ceramics, metallurgy, and painting) are also organised and often inspired by the Arslantepe finds.

Recently, fashion shows were organized in the Caravanserai of Battalgazi and in Istanbul with clothes using fabrics designed with the motifs of the 4th millennium seals from

Arslantepe. Local awareness of the importance of the site is thus rather strong and constitutes a good base from which to start a broad and all-inclusive promotion program.

2.b. History and Development

2.b.1. Excavation and Research History

Excavations began in the 1930s, conducted by a French mission headed by L. Delaporte. By investigating the upper part of the mound, Delaporte unearthed the remains of remarkable Iron Age buildings, among which the so-called neo-Assyrian palace (7th century BC) and the well-known Lions' Gate (9th-8th centuries BC). The gate was flanked on either side by two lions statues carved from stone blocks with high relief bodies and round heads, which probably gave the name to the site (Arslan Tepe, namely, "Lions ' Hill"), and had walls lined with stone slabs decorated with bas-reliefs, whose iconography and style were typical of the neo-Hittite kingdoms art. Inside the gate, there was a great royal statue that had been felled and probably intentionally concealed. The statue and the reliefs can be admired in the Ankara Museum of Ancient Civilizations. The Second World War put an end to the work of the Delaporte expedition and after a short and rather fruitless resumption of excavations in 1949-51 by C. Schaeffer, the French activity in the site came to an end.

In 1961 a new Italian archaeological project began at Arslantepe, originally under P. Meriggi and S. Puglisi and soon after under the latter alone, which is still being operating in the site, and has since become one of the major archaeological projects of Rome's La Sapienza University. After Puglisi, the excavations were taken over by Alba Palmieri and are now continuing under the direction of Marcella Frangipane. The Italian mission started investigating in the same NE zone where the French had previously worked, identifying a long stratigraphic sequence along the northern edge of the mound. There, a number of building levels dating back to the 1st and 2nd millennia BC - Neo-Hittite (Iron Age), Imperial Hittite (Late Bronze II) and Early Hittite (Late Bronze I) periods have been brought to light above unsubstantial Early Bronze layers with scanty architectural remains and a series of seven building levels with domestic structures from Late Chalcolithic 3-4 (4th millennium BC), built on the virgin soil. The sequence in this area ended with the remains of a late Roman occupation.

In the last 45 years the researches have focused on the prehistoric and proto- historic levels of Arslantepe, by operating in the W and SW zones of the mound, where the earliest settlements made up the original nucleus of the tell. There, a long and detailed sequence of Late Chalcolithic, Early Bronze, and Middle Bronze levels, from the end of the 5th to the beginning of the 2nd millennium cal BC, has been investigated over vast areas, supported by more than one hundred C14 dates.

Only recently, in 2008, excavations in the NE zone were resumed to once again investigate, by using modern research methodologies, the important phases in the late history of the site, between the Hittite "expansion" to the region, the subsequent dismemberment of the imperial system, and the crucial transitional periods during which the neo-Hittite kingdom of Malatya was formed. An imposing town-wall and two new beautiful reliefs, now exhibited in the Malatya Museum, have been found belonging to these transitional periods.



Plan of the Arslantepe mound with the excavated areas and structures of various periods of the sequence.

The ongoing programme of excavations is central to the better understanding and its history and significance. The following are ongoing operational issues and targets at the site:

Research issues: On the medium-long term the broad research questions that are leading excavations are:

- A further investigation of the origin of State and bureaucracy, through the enlargement and further understanding of the palatial area,
- The process of development of hierarchies, through the investigations of the earlier formative stages (5th and 4th millennia BC)
- The investigations of the earliest occupation of the site and the beginning of its history,
- The research on the forms and dynamics of the Hittite period occupation, inquiring into the relations between this “periphery” centre on the border of the empire and the political core of the Hittite state in Central Anatolia (Latye Bronze Age, 2nd millennium BC).
- Finally, the investigations of the transition and development towards the foundation of the Melid kingdom and its subsequent collapse, through the analysis of the final Late

Bronze and Early Iron Age levels (transition to and beginning of the 1st millennium BC).

1. Practical seasonal targets:

- protection of trenches and outstanding architectural findings during the excavation period
- restoration of archaeological finds,
- annual monitoring of the state of preservation of the palace mud-brick structures
- analysis, cataloguing and study of archaeological finds, seasonally brought to light and stored.
- Interdisciplinary analyses of various find categories

2. End of season targets:

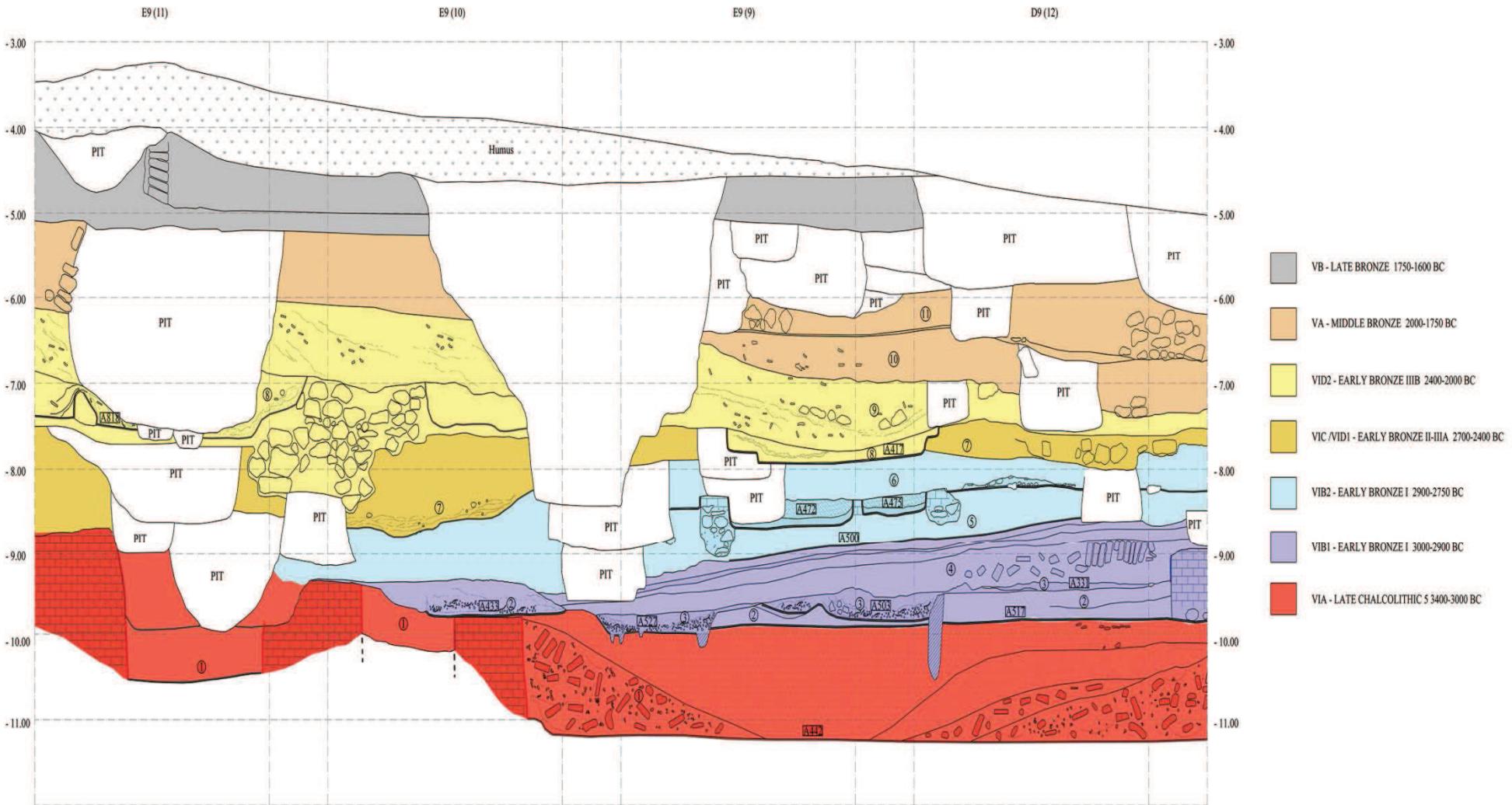
- secure storage
- handing over of inventoried objects to the Malatya Archaeological Museum
- secure closing of the excavation and weather proofing as necessary.

3. Long Term Considerations:

- protection and conservation of outstanding architectural remains and artefacts,
- on-site conservation of monuments and special findings for display where necessary,
- on and off site storage and
- off-site display of finds.

2.b.2. History of Arslantepe

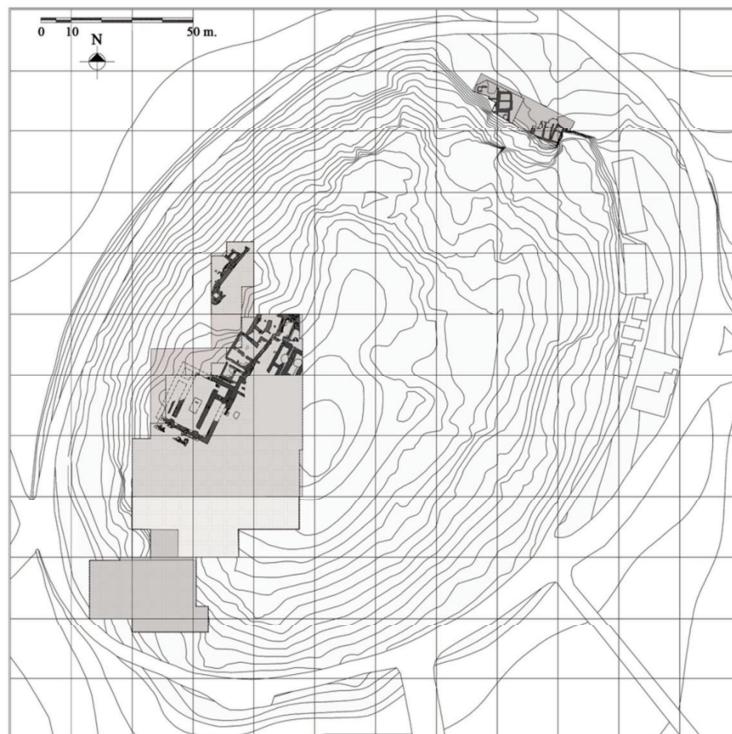
The presence of Halaf and Ubaid sherds found out of context in a recently opened excavation area on the lower western slope of the mound indicates that Arslantepe was certainly occupied as early as the 6th millennium BC. The earliest evidence so far well documented in the excavations, however, dates back to the end of the 5th millennium BC: Arslantepe period VIII / Late Chalcolithic 1-2 (4300-3900 cal BC). This period is documented by three superimposed building levels, which comprise domestic structures full of equipment for cooking food (numerous ovens, some very large in size, inside and outside the dwellings). The pottery recovered in these levels belongs to a local repertoire with connections in the areas of south-eastern Turkey to the west of the Euphrates (Oylum Höyük). This repertoire nevertheless, in general terms, form part of a wider typically post-Ubaid ceramic horizon which links - Eastern Anatolia to the various areas of Upper Mesopotamia in the initial phase of Late Chalcolithic (LC 1-2).



Stratigraphic section with some of the superimposed periods represented at Arslantepe

Phases	Arslantepe period	Absolute Chronology	Other contemporary cultures of the NE
Roman and Byzantine	I	-	
Iron Age	II-III	1100-712	Neo-Hittite
Late Bronze Age II	IV	1600-1200	Middle Hittite reign and Empire
Late Bronze Age I	V B	1750-1600	Early Hittite reign
Middle Bronze Age	V A	2000-1750	Palaeo-assyrian colonies
Early Bronze Age III	VI D	2500-2000	Early Dynastic IIIb, Ur III
Early Bronze Age II	VI C	2750-2500	Early Dynastic II-IIa
Early Bronze Age IB	VI B2	3000-2800	Early Dynastic I
Early Bronze Age IA	VI B1	3100-3000	Jemdet Nasr
Late Chalcolithic 5	VI A	3400-3100	Late Uruk
Late Chalcolithic 3-4	VII	3900-3400	Middle Uruk
Late Chalcolithic 1-2	VIII	4700-4000	Early Uruk and Final Ubaid

Period VII developed over a long period of time (Late Chalcolithic 3-4, 3900-3400 cal B.C.) and, among the periods found at Arslantepe, is one of the most extended settlement. Currently Period VII has been indeed identified at several locations on the mound and is characterised by a clear differentiation between functionally and symbolically diverse areas. It has been excavated in three separated sectors, each characterized by different functional features: The North-east, where common people houses have been found, the Western/South-western area, where elite and public buildings have been brought to light, and the Southern zone, where several traces of substantial structures dated to period VII have been identified immediately underneath the palace structures of period VIA. The latter, even though they had been badly destroyed by the palace itself, witness the extent of the settlement from north to south during this period.

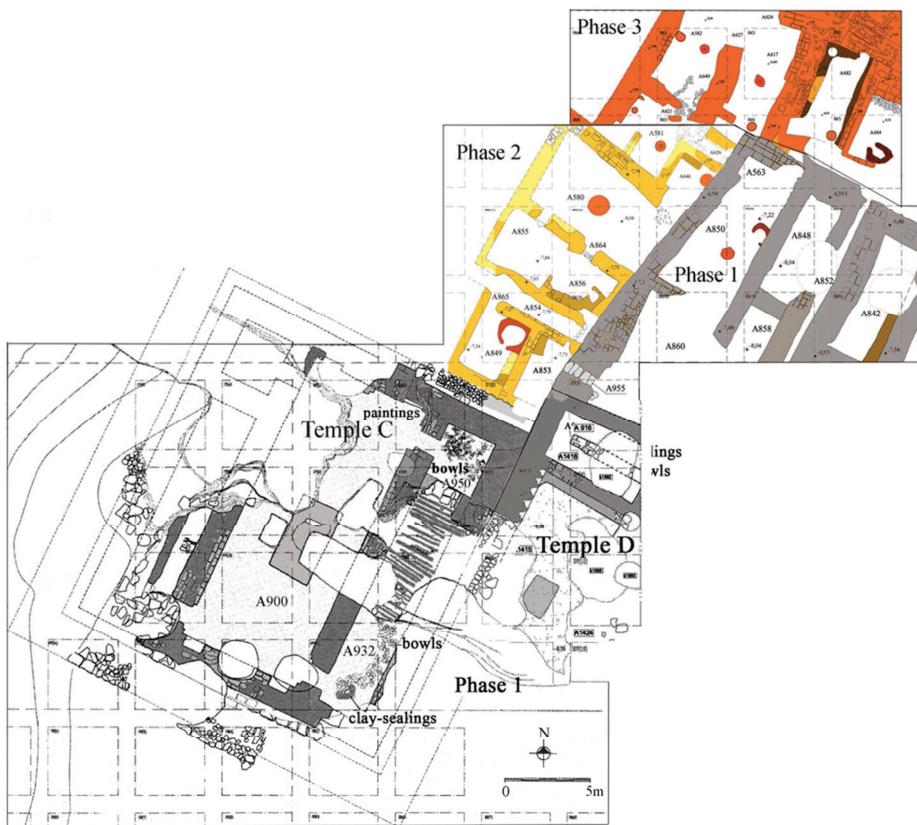


Arslantepe, plan of the areas where Period VII structures have been identified

The excavations carried out during the 60s on the North-eastern side of the mound, at the northern limit of the tell, brought to light at a lower elevation, just above the virgin soil in this area, six superimposed habitation levels belonging to Period VII, which consisted of relatively small mud-brick houses, with burials under the floors and domestic features, such as numerous ovens.

No less than four main phases dated to the Late Chalcolithic 3-4 were excavated so far in the upper part of the mound towards the West, where they were standing above a stratified deposit more than 15 m high. This area therefore appears as the core of the most ancient occupation of the site (from at least the 6th millennium BC), and the elevation reached during the preceding periods made this zone the summit of the ancient mound in Late Chalcolithic, both in periods VII and VIA. Here, the most monumental and imposing buildings have been significantly erected, forming a separate and well distinct elite district, made of substantial elite residences, and a ceremonial public area with two temples.

These temples (Temple C and Temple D) were built in the last phases of Period VII, adjacent to some long rooms and open areas probably intended respectively for craft activities and cooking practices related to the ceremonial performances. “Temple C” was the last building phase of period VII and was built near the western edge of the mound above a stone, mud, and wooden platform, terracing the slope and raising the building to the South and West, so that it was visible from the surrounding villages in the plain.



Period VII. Composite plan of the buildings on the hill top. Different colours highlight structures belonging to different phases of period VII: pale hatched grey is used for the latest buildings (Temple C, Temple D and adjoining structures), yellow for the structures belonging to the previous phase and red for the so-called ‘columns building’ belonging to the older phase.

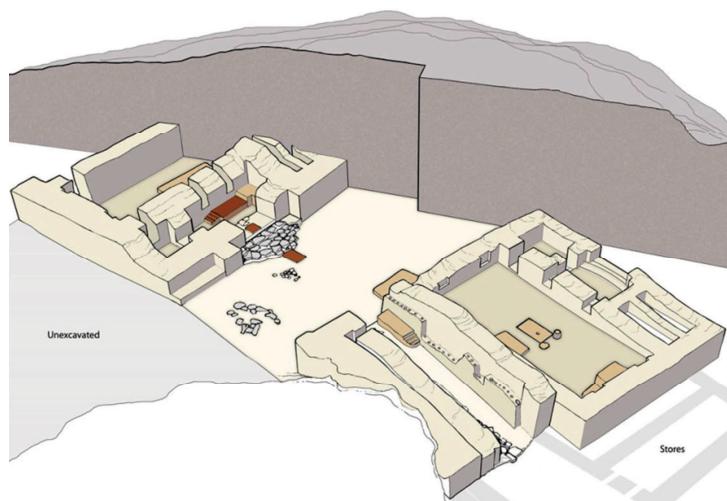
Economic and political centralisation reached its climax in the next period VIA (Late Chalcolithic 5, 3400-3100 BC). The two temples were abandoned and to the E/SE of them, an

imposing and completely new architectural complex was built along the slope of the mound, made up of agglutinated monumental buildings standing on several terraces and linked by corridors and courtyards, where various different public functions (religious/ceremonial, administrative, storage, reception) were performed.

The residential structures of the palatial complex, of fairly large dimensions, were built again in the uppermost area of the ancient mound, directly on top of the walls of Period VII structures, indicating that, although there was a radical change in the political organization and the consequent arrangement of the public area, an interesting continuity is observable in the residential sectors of both periods. Both the residential and public areas of period VIA expanded enormously, forming what we can now undoubtedly define as the first example of a Palace. Bipartite houses, similar in shape and dimension to two small temples included in the palace (Temples A and B), were erected in the northern sector of the complex, also invading the areas previously occupied by Temples C and D. They were however communicating with the public area of the complex through a door leading into a monumental building (Audience Building) opened onto a large courtyard where people had to gather to pay tribute to the authority.

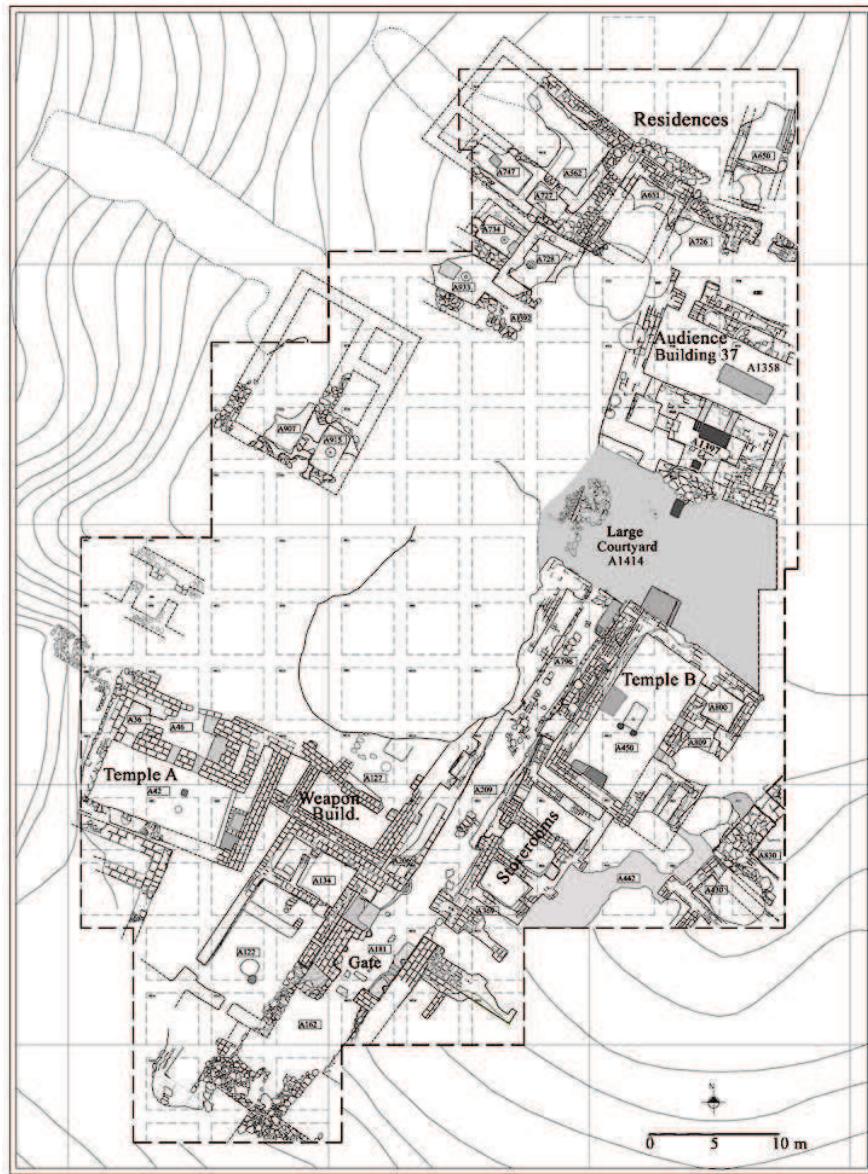
The palace expanded over time towards the southern parts of the slope, showing a process of quick growth and development in architectural, political and economic terms.

The buildings of this huge monumental complex were added progressively from north to south, starting from the point where the Period VII remains have been brought to light. The development was determined by the need to fulfil new functions. A temple (Temple B), a roofed entrance corridor and the Audience building formed the first nucleus.



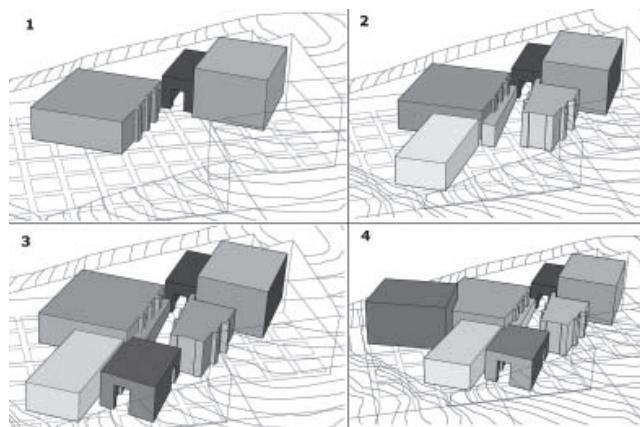
The earliest core of the Period VIA Palace (3400-3300 BC)

In a second phase storerooms and other buildings were added to the south on both sides of the corridor that was extended by building both open and roofed new sectors. In this way, the alignment of the corridor's axis slightly changed and a dumping space was obtained in the western wall of the corridor where thousands of clay sealings were discarded. In a third phase the southern limit of the corridor was reshaped by adding a gate chamber, and a second temple (Temple A) was added to the west of the complex.



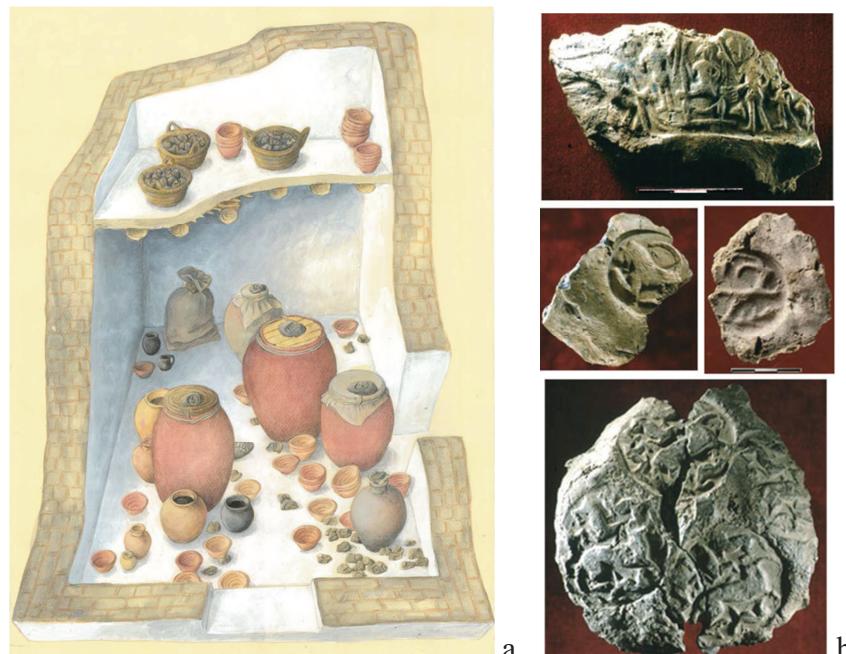
VIA Palace: general plan

It is possible to point out this sequence by analysing the architectural relationships among the units. Figure below, 1-2 shows the transition from the first to the second phase with the storerooms adjoined, on a lower terrace, to the southern temple wall. 3-4 show the last phases of the complex in its maximum extension, with the addition of the gate and Temple A



From the second phase onwards the growth of the economic power of the ruling elites was completely accomplished. The adding of the store rooms, full and vessels of different size and function, as well as of mass-produced bowls and seal impressions (*cretulae*), together with the new dump of this administratibve materials highlight that the new power was supported by a complex administrative organisation for the control of goods, mainly staple goods, and particularly food.

The in-depth study conducted for many years on these *cretulae* shows that hierarchically organised officials sealed and controlled different types of containers and storerooms, and through the accounting of sealing operations and the documentary value assigned to the *cretulae*, perfectly managed and temporarily recorded the economic transactions even in the absence of writing.



a: Reconstruction of the redistribution storeroom (drawing by A. Siracusano); b: *cretulae* from the VIA Palace



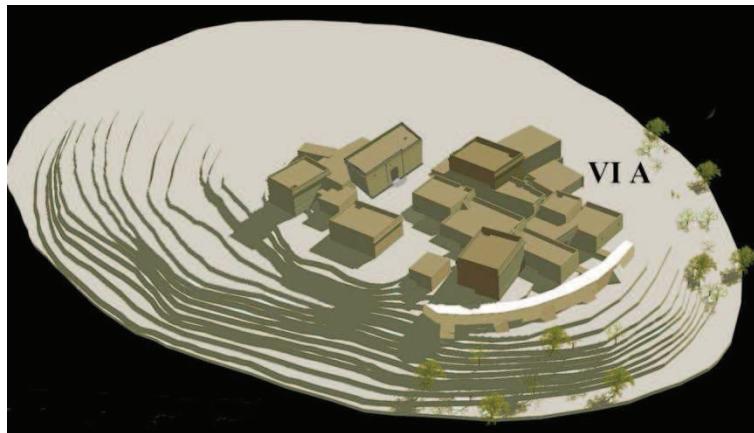
The discovery of arsenical copper weapons, door socket at the corner of a monumental entrance to another building, and various objects made of sophisticated alloys, including lead and

silver, demonstrate a high technological standard attained in metallurgy and, for the first time, the use of the sword.



Period VIA: metal objects

According to the data at disposal so far, it is only possible to sketch the shape of the settlement in Period VIA, but the mound appears not to have been entirely occupied, being mainly the seat of the public and elite buildings.



In this period, Arslantepe probably had a major role as an intermediary centre in the vast network of interregional relations involving the Syro-Mesopotamian communities and those living in the mountain areas of Central-Eastern and North-Eastern Anatolia, while at all times retaining its marked autonomy. The development of a powerful system of centralised political and economic control on a site which never actually became “urban” in a real sense of the term shows that, whereas Arslantepe played an important and active part in the State formation process, in close connection with what was happening in the Mesopotamian world, it also followed its own specific, and different, development pattern, which was less deeply-rooted and stable than those in the highly urbanised environments, and rapidly collapsed.

A radical crisis overwhelmed the central institutions at the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC leading to the collapse of the Mesopotamian-type centralised system, and changing the course of Arslantepe's history for ever. Around 3000 BC a devastating fire completely destroyed the

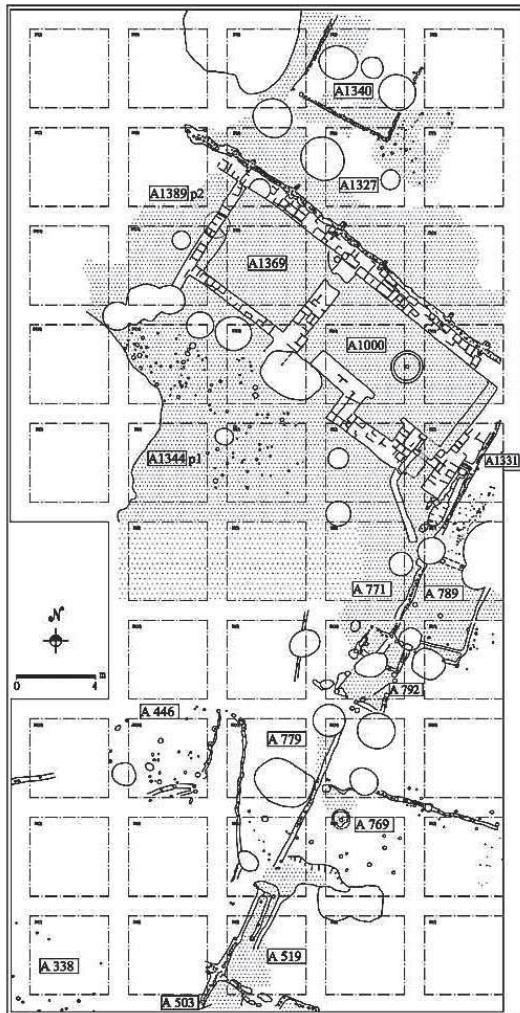
palace, putting an end to the early-state organisation of Late Chalcolithic society. Relations with the southern areas and with Syro-Iraqi Jezira were weakened, while close links remained for a short time (during Early Bronze I) with the rest of the Upper and Middle Euphrates Valley; at the same time new relations were established and strengthened with the north-eastern Anatolian and Transcaucasian world.

One of the elements of instability and imbalance must certainly have arisen from the presence of pastoralist groups from the mountains who regularly visited the Malatya plain, probably supplying the palace with dairy products and metal. These groups do not seem to have necessarily come from far away, i.e. from the Transcaucasian regions, but may rather have been local transhumant people culturally linked to Early Transcaucasian groups moving around along the north-eastern highlands of Anatolia. When the crisis of the central institutions began around 3100 BC, they might have contributed to this crisis by rebelling, together with the local population, against the central institutions and driving an increasing need for defence. The finding of weapons in one of the Arslantepe palace buildings, with a combination of swords and spears for the first time ever, suggests the embryonic development of a military apparatus and the initial codification of organised forms of battle. Another indication of instability and conflicts was the construction, at the end of period VIA, of an imposing wall standing on a stone foundation, which seems to have surrounded the palace complex and certainly blocked the entrance road leading to the monumental gate.

Power began to change in character and to be imposed by force. But, without a solid basis of social legitimisation and without a compact urban structure based on a firmly-rooted system of economic specialisation, as was the case in Mesopotamia, a system of the kind we have described for Arslantepe was unable to withstand the impact of conflicts, clashing interests, and contradictions.

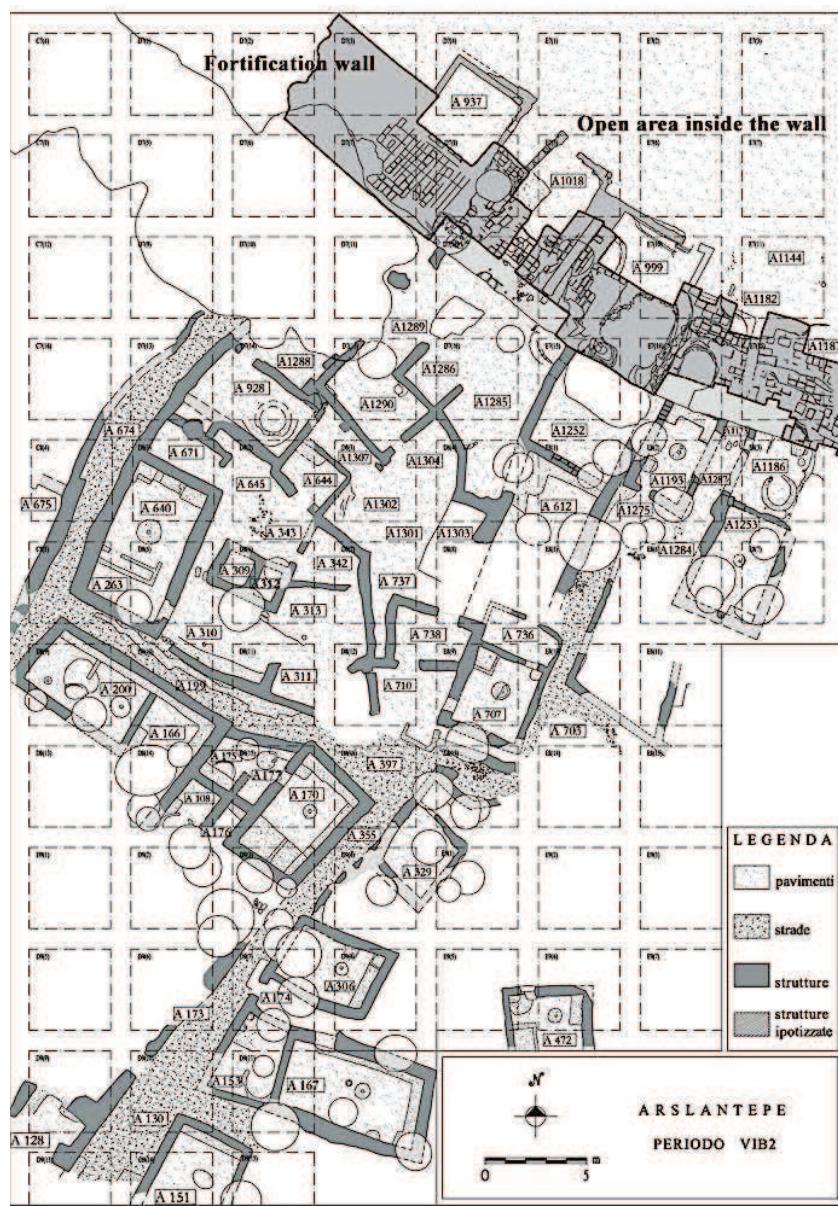
Two phases have been recognised at Arslantepe in Early Bronze I (3100-2800 cal BC, Period VIB), providing evidence of instability, and probably conflicts, which are clearly shown by a complex sequence of events occurred on the site for one or two centuries following the collapse of the palatial system.

In the first phase of EBI (period VIB1) the areas previously occupied by the public and élite buildings were abandoned, and probably seasonal settlements were built on their ruins by groups of transhumant pastoralists who may have been moving around the plain and in the surrounding areas even earlier, joining a vast system of relations with the Eastern Anatolian and Transcaucasian world, with which they shared customs and cultural features. The new groups lived in sub-quadrangular huts with wattle and daub walls coated with mud, separated by wide, open areas, often with rows of post-holes which may have been post fences, perhaps for stabbing livestock.



Period VIB1: The last phase of the settlement with wooden huts and fences for the animals. A large communal mud-brick building was built on the top of the mound

At the beginning of period VIB2, new forms of power seem to have been re-established, perhaps as a result of the introduction of a new political system and a new leadership. On the top of the mound a stout 4 m thick mud-brick fortification wall built on stone foundations with internal buttresses surrounded the upper part of the settlement, like a sort of citadel, whose features are yet to be identified. A village developed at the base of the fortification wall covering the whole southern slope of the mound, outside the great wall, in the second phase of period VIB2, and comprised small mud-brick dwellings (with one to three rooms), with the floors covered with many kilos of charred grains (mostly barley, but also wheat and pulses), which had probably fallen from upper floors where the harvest had been stored before the fire destroyed the village. There were courtyards and open areas for activities performed in common, such as slaughtering livestock or working metals (smelting) (fig.).



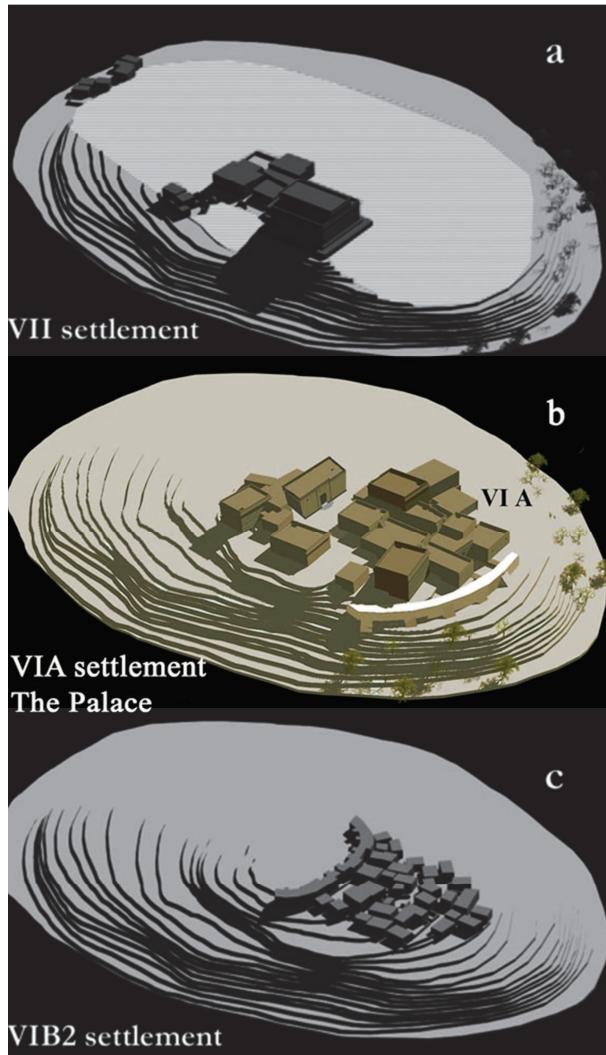
Period VIB2. Plan of the main village phase

Further evidence of the co-existence of two different groups and two cultural horizons comes from the discovery of a rich tomb, the so-called Royal Tomb (T1), dated to about 3000-2900 BC, which seems to belong to the very beginning of period VIB2 or the transition from VIB1 to VIB2. This is an imposing stone cist built at the bottom of a large irregular 5 m wide pit, located on the edge of the village, outside the fortification wall. It contained an adult lying in a flexed position on its right side accompanied by a very rich assortment of grave gifts, including vessels, personal ornaments made of cornelian, rock crystal, silver and gold, together with a hoard of metal objects placed behind its back, comprising weapons, tools, and ornaments made of arsenical copper, copper-silver alloy, silver and gold. On the top of the cist were the bodies of four adolescents, probably sacrificed.



The 'Royal Tomb' (3000-2900 BC): The cist grave, head with diadem, and some metal gifts

The presence of the extraordinary burial, and the large fortification wall on the top of the mound, together with the disappearance of cult areas, cretulae, and mass produced bowls, indicate that a new type of power had been established, focusing more on defence and on the political and military role of the chiefs rather than on their capacity to centralise resources and labour, as had been the case in the fourth millennium.



Reconstruction of the excavated areas of the settlements from periods VII, VI A and VI B2.

In fig. 1a, the hatch highlights the possible extent of the period VII town

Following the fire that also destroyed the period VIB2 settlement, a new and more radical fracture occurred, marked by a temporary abandonment of the site before it slowly re-emerged with wholly new cultural and political features. Between 2750 and 2500 BC (Early Bronze II, Arslantepe period VIC) the site was first re-occupied by nomadic groups which perhaps settled there on a seasonal basis, leaving light structures behind, as in the earlier period VIB1, but this time building a few scattered slightly sunken circular huts paved with mud and tiny pole structures, together with rubbish pits. It was only in a second phase in this period that a large terraced multi-roomed building was erected on the upper part of the tell. It seems to be a sort of cluster of large quadrangular rooms fitted with new types of domestic equipment, such as mortars sunken into the floors, horseshoe-shaped hearths, and articulated ovens with high cooking platforms and basins for ashes. This large isolated building, which also showed evidence of conservation and processing of agricultural products, may have housed an extended family or kinship group. All around this building, nomadic people continued to use the site, perhaps seasonally.

All the pottery was now handmade, and comprised two main classes of production: One black or dark burnished ware, originated from the red-black pottery belonging to the Transcaucasian tradition but this time using new shapes with new typological traits. The second

class was a light buff ware, painted with red or brown linear geometric motifs in a very distinctive local style (Gelincik ware).

The shape of the houses, the domestic equipment and pottery all show a radical cultural change in a period characterised by the fragmentation of groups and pronounced provincialism. Arslantepe may have remained as a benchmark site in the narrow territory of the Malatya plain, though no longer dominating it. From that moment onwards the history of the site and of its region was completely separated from the history of the Syro-Mesopotamian areas and of the southernmost region of the Middle Euphrates Valley, rather being an integral part of the Eastern Anatolian world.

During the Early Bronze III (Period VID, 2500-2000 BC), the settlements gradually spread to occupy the slope of the mound with increasingly planning and density, and were provided with roads, channels, courtyards and craft workshops. At the beginning of this period the groups with semi-subterranean round houses still continued to frequent the site mainly settling in free spaces or on the ruins of abandoned houses, but they gradually disappeared as the densely built-up settlement expanded to cover the whole of the mound. The EBIII settlements slightly changed across time as the houses and the quarters were continually refurbished and rebuilt, but there were no more massive widespread episodes of destruction. Arslantepe once again became the largest and most important centre in the Malatya plain, even though there is no clear evidence of any new political centralisation. Indeed, the evidence suggests that the organisation was based on small autonomous centres, increasing in number in the plain and on the surrounding hills. This new organisation was perhaps connected with new defence requirements, as showed by the construction of a huge fortification wall, with a stout semi-circular bastion, on the edge of the mound, surrounding the whole of the settlement.



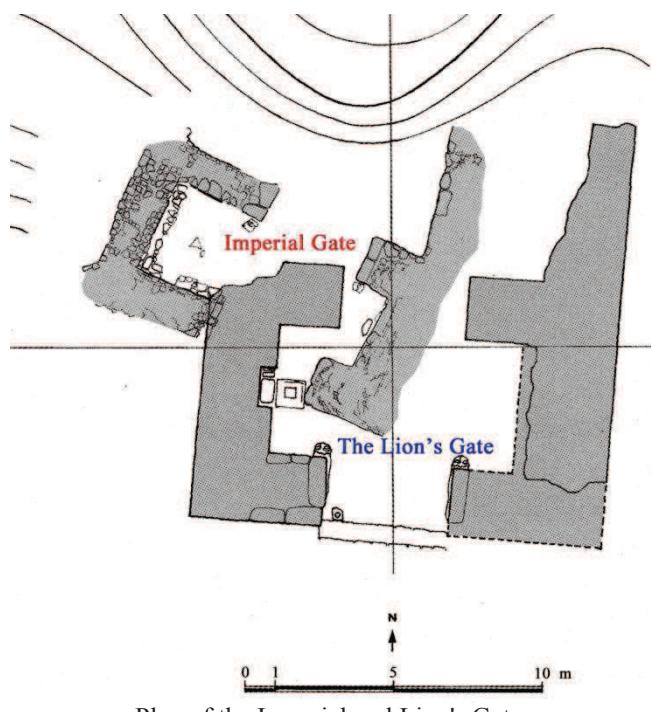
Arslantepe, Periods VIC and VID (Early Bronze II and III). Left: Pottery and house form Period VIC; right: Pottery and town-wall from Period VID

The pottery, which was still handmade, very closely followed the tradition of the previous period, keeping the two main classes, black burnished and painted, and developing a number of typological traits, which became well characterised and full established in this period. A much denser, complex and standardised style of pottery painting emerged, closely related to similar

items produced in the Province of Elazig, which may have been the work of specialised craftsmen who distributed their products throughout the whole area. The finding of a metallurgist workshop with numerous moulds confirms that the craftsmanship was highly specialised.

Most of the evidence from the Middle Bronze Age (Period VA, 2000-1750 BC) has been found in the south-western area of the mound, exhibiting very close continuity in terms of the architecture and material culture with the Early Bronze III settlements, on which they were directly superimposed. The buildings were seriously damaged because of their closeness to the top of the mound and due to later terracing operations. The architecture was therefore limited to only a few structures preserved in good condition, among which one dwelling comprising a single large square room with an imposing central horse-shoe shaped double hearth and the remains of what was probably a weaving loom, suggested by the discovery of dozens of clay loom weights piled up in the NW corner of this room. The pottery also partially indicates continuity with the previous period, even though new classes of wheel-made ware now appeared, some of which indicate that contacts had been resumed, albeit sporadically, with the Syro-Mesopotamian world.

The political breakup that is thought to have occurred in the territory of Malatya and Elazig in the second half of the 3rd millennium may have created favourable conditions for the cultural and, later, expansion eastward of the Hittite state during the 2nd millennium BC. The effects of this influence may already have begun to be felt in the Early Kingdom period judging from the fact that, in Late Bronze I (Period VB, 1750-1600 BC), in the Arslantepe defence system made of earthen walls, a town gate was built, flanked by two bipartite quadrangular towers, which was highly reminiscent of similar central Anatolian gates. The entrance to the town now pointed in a N/NE direction, namely towards the Euphrates, unlike what had occurred in pre-protohistoric times; and this new arrangement of the fortification systems was to remain unchanged throughout the imperial Hittite and neo-Hittite periods, although the town became smaller and there was a slight shift of the gates westwards.

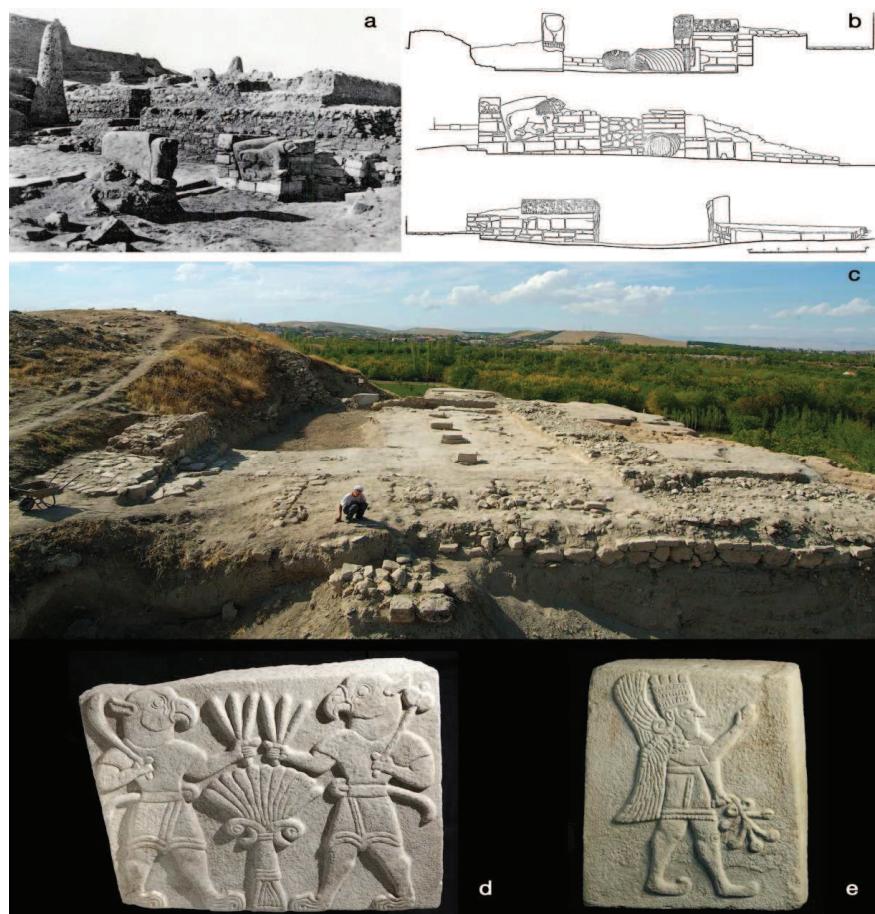


Plan of the Imperial and Lion's Gates

The gate of the ‘imperial’ period (Late Bronze II, Period IV, 1600-1200 BC) had a different ground plan - ‘tenaille’ type -, but was however still wholly central Anatolian in style. There was also a gallery with a ‘false vault’ belonging to this phase, which has evident parallels with Alisar and Alaca posterns, and may have been a tunnel leading to the water table. The Hittite

citadel, which mainly extended in the N/NE area of the mound, was probably destroyed after the collapse of the empire but, between the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennia BC, a new huge town-wall was built, to which a town gate, now destroyed, might have been attached. This gate was probably decorated by stone reliefs, judging from the finding of two of them collapsed on the floor linked to the wall.

This transitional period, during which the local rulers probably took over the government of the town and the region, prepared the foundation of the new autonomous Neo-Hittite kingdom of Melid/Malatya (Iron Age, Period III), when Arslantepe was once again to flourish as the capital of this kingdom with the construction of new imposing buildings, among which a large pillar hall and the famous “Lions Gate”, entirely decorated by typical stone reliefs. The settlement increasingly took the form of a small citadel, a seat of political and administrative power, while the existence of a lower town is still unknown at the present state of research.



a) Large pillared hall from Neo-Hittite period b) Section of Lion's Gate, c) A large pillared hall adjacent to the area where the Lion's Gate was, d) The second relief found, e) The first relief found

Even though the remains of minor occupations dating back to the late Roman and Byzantine age have been uncovered, it was the destruction of the neo-Hittite town by Sargon II of Assyria in 712 BC that put an end to Arslantepe's prosperity and centrality.